EXCLUSIVE! SEE BEHIND THE SCENES AT FENDER'S CUSTOM SHOP!

Now incorporating bassplayer

Bass Guitar

FUTURE

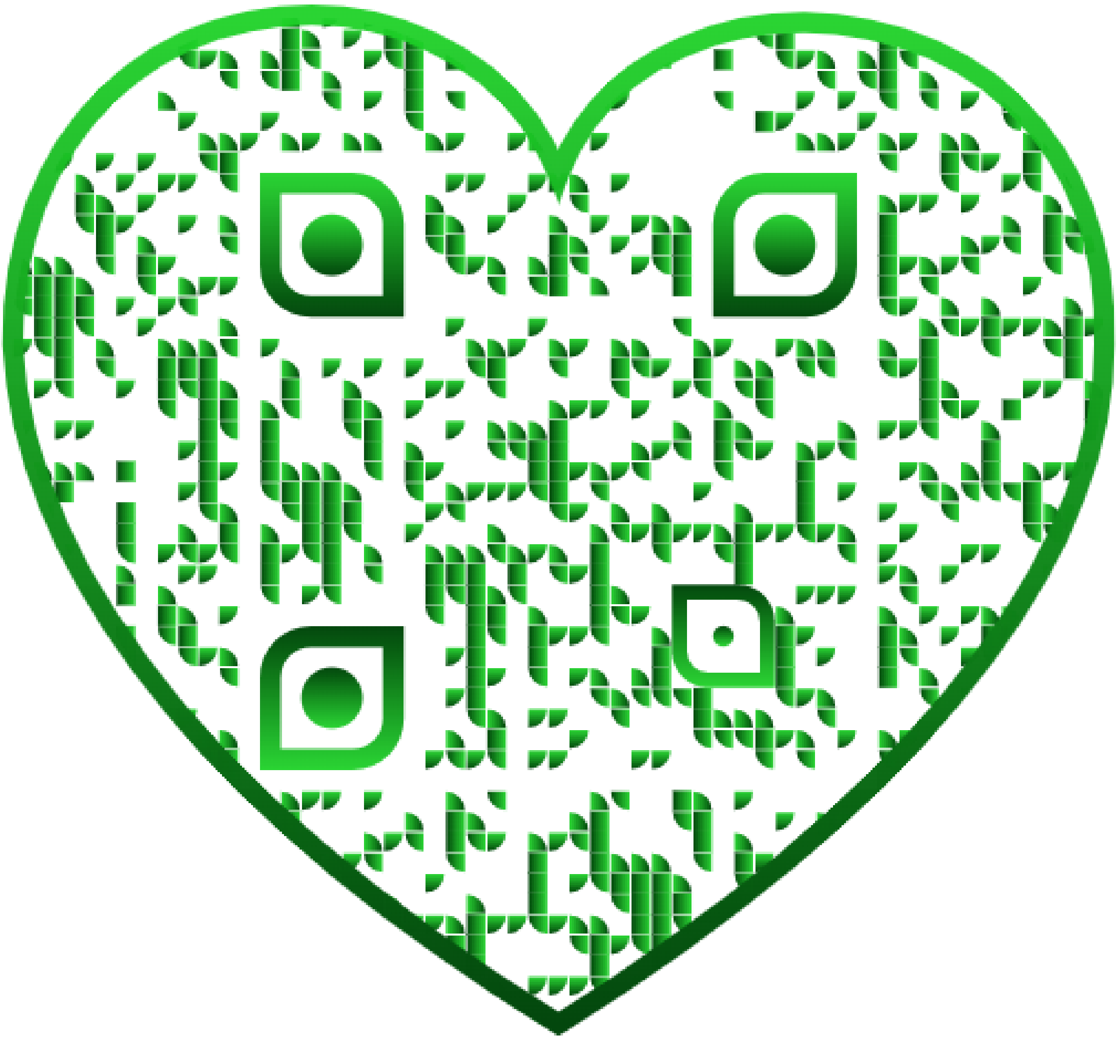
FELIX PASTORIUS
CONTINUING THE LEGACY
"No-one expects more from me than I do!"

JACO
THE MAN. THE FATHER. THE ONE.

PAOLO GREGOLETTO, **TRIVIUM**

MIKE MCKEEGAN, **THERAPY?**

REVIEWED
BACCHUS MODERN VINTAGE
DB CABS | FENDER
AND MANY MORE!



Be part of our community.
Follow us on **harleybentonofficial**

YOUR STYLE. YOUR GEAR.
More information at **www.harleybenton.com**

Harley Benton

CONTENTS

ISSUE 184 AUGUST 2020

Felix Pastorius, son of the late Jaco, has a unique job to do. He's a bass player with an ongoing career to maintain; he has to field endless questions about his genius father, taken decades before his time; and he has to live a life with that unmistakable surname, with all the expectations it brings. We're here to help him to fulfil those tasks, so when he sat down with us to reveal his current activities and future plans, we regarded it as a privilege. Jaco remains an enigma to most of us because he died long before his life's work was complete: the light which Felix sheds on him can't possibly come from anyone else.

This issue covers a huge amount of ground, as is our stated mission, when it comes to interviews, lessons and gear reviews. What's new, however, is the *Bass Player* logo on the cover. You may already know that since 2018, this magazine and America's acclaimed *Bass Player* have been identical in content; well, a couple of issues from now the title of *Bass Guitar* magazine is changing to *Bass Player UK*. Don't worry, though – the content will be the same as it is now, although we'll redesign some of the pages for a more sophisticated look and bring a couple of new writers on board. Our mission will stay exactly the same: to make you the best bass player you can be. Thanks for staying with us on the next stage of our journey through the low end...

Joel McIver, Editor

Gear

38 **Fender Vintera 60s Jazz £929**
Looking back to simpler times can be fun... But is there a point when it becomes too much? Mike Brooks assesses the charms of this unashamedly retro Vintera

40 **Modern Vintage MVP4 $1499**
Assisted by ace luthier Rob Elrick, the new Modern Vintage brand brings us its MVP. Is it a 'most valued product', asks Stuart Clayton

42 **Bacchus Woodline Jazz DX5AC-WBDP £1650**
A Japanese Super-Jazz? Mike Brooks heads to the land of the rising sun

44 **MXR Clone Looper, Pigtronix Infinity 2 £160, £199**
Looping is all the rage among bass players, so let's send loop legend Steve Lawson off to review two of 'em...

46 **DB Bass Elbee 10 Series II, Embee 12 and Embee 1210 Series II Cabinets £395, £595, £795**
Unboxing clever? Brooks plugs into these uncompromising cabs

Future PLC, Quay House, The Ambury, Bath, BA1 1UA, UK

Editorial
Editor **Joel McIver**
joel.mciver@futurenet.com
Art Editors **Rosie Webber, Mixie Von Bormann**
Managing Editor **Stan Bull**
Technical Consultant **Stuart Clayton**
Content Director, Music **Scott Rowley**
Group Art Editor **Graham Dalzell**

Contributors
Antonio Angotti, Mike Brooks, Stuart Clayton, Hywel Davies, Steve Lawson, Phil Mann, Nik Preston, Dan Veall

Cover images
Getty

Photography
Getty and Future Studio
All copyrights and trademarks are recognised and respected

Advertising
Media packs are available on request
Chief Revenue Officer **Zack Sullivan**
UK Commercial Sales Director **Clare Dove**
Advertising Sales Director **Lara Jaggon**
Account Sales Director **Guy Meredith**
guy.meredith@futurenet.com

International
Bass Guitar Magazine is available for licensing. Contact the Licensing team to discuss partnership opportunities.
Head of Print Licensing **Rachel Shaw**
licensing@futurenet.com

Subscriptions
Email enquiries **contact@myfavouritemagazines.co.uk**
UK orderline & enquiries **0888 888 8888**
Overseas order line and enquiries **+44 (0)8888 888888**
Online orders & enquiries **www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk**
CRM Director **Louise Dudfield**

Circulation
Head of Newstrade **Tim Mathers**

Production
Head of Production **Mark Constance**
Production Project Manager **Clare Scott**
Advertising Production Manager **Joanne Crosby**
Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**
Production Manager **Vivienne Turner**

Management
Chief Content Officer **Aaron Asadi**
Brand Director **Stuart Williams**
Group Editor in Chief **Scott Rowley**
Commercial Finance Director **Dan Jotcham**

Printed by Buxton Press

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU www.marketforce.co.uk Tel: 0203 787 9001

ISSN **1476521**

We are committed to only using magazine paper which is derived from responsibly managed, certified forestry and chlorine-free manufacture. The paper in this magazine was sourced and produced from sustainable managed forests, conforming to strict environmental and socioeconomic standards. The manufacturing paper mill holds full FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certification and accreditation

All contents © 2020 Future Publishing Limited or published under licence. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be used, stored, transmitted or reproduced in any way without the prior written permission of the publisher. Future Publishing Limited (company number 2008885) is registered in England and Wales. Registered office: Quay House, The Ambury, Bath BA1 1UA. All information contained in this publication is for information only and is, as far as we are aware, correct at the time of going to press. Future cannot accept any responsibility for errors or inaccuracies in such information. You are advised to contact manufacturers and retailers directly with regard to the price of products/services referred to in this publication. Apps and websites mentioned in this publication are not under our control. We are not responsible for their contents or any other changes or updates to them. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein.

If you submit material to us, you warrant that you own the material and/or have the necessary rights/permissions to supply the material and you automatically grant Future and its licensees a licence to publish your submission in whole or in part in any/all issues and/or editions of publications, in any format published worldwide and on associated websites, social media channels and associated products. Any material you submit is sent at your own risk and, although every care is taken, neither Future nor its employees, agents, subcontractors or licensees shall be liable for loss or damage. We assume all unsolicited material is for publication unless otherwise stated, and reserve the right to edit, amend, adapt all submissions.

Widely Recycled

ipso. For press freedom with responsibility

FUTURE

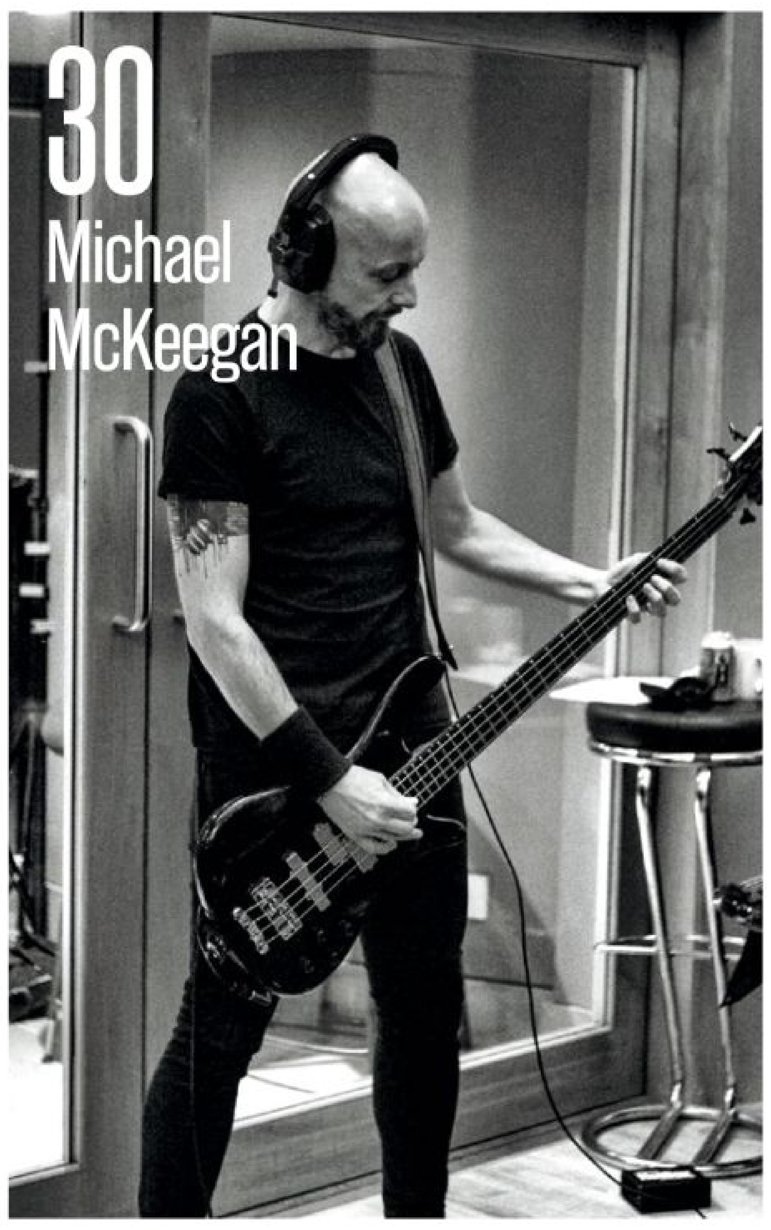
Connectors. Creators. Experience Makers.

Future plc is a public company quoted on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR)
www.futureplc.com

Chief executive **Zillah Byng-Thorne**
Non-executive chairman **Richard Huntingford**
Chief financial officer **Rachel Addison**

Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244

20 Felix Pastorius


30 Michael McKeegan

32 Margaret LaBombard

Bassists

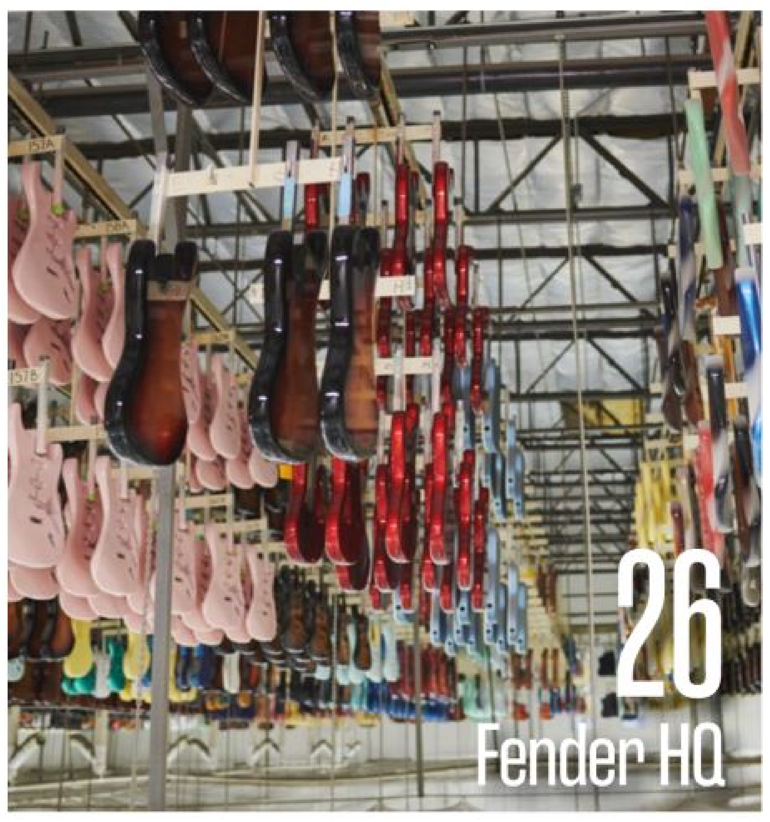
20 Felix Pastorius
What do you do when your late father was the world's most famous bass player? You continue his legacy in his name, and bring your own skills to the equation. Felix talks to Mike Brooks about the resurrection of the Bass Of Doom, managing the expectations of Jaco's huge fanbase and his own goals as a bassist

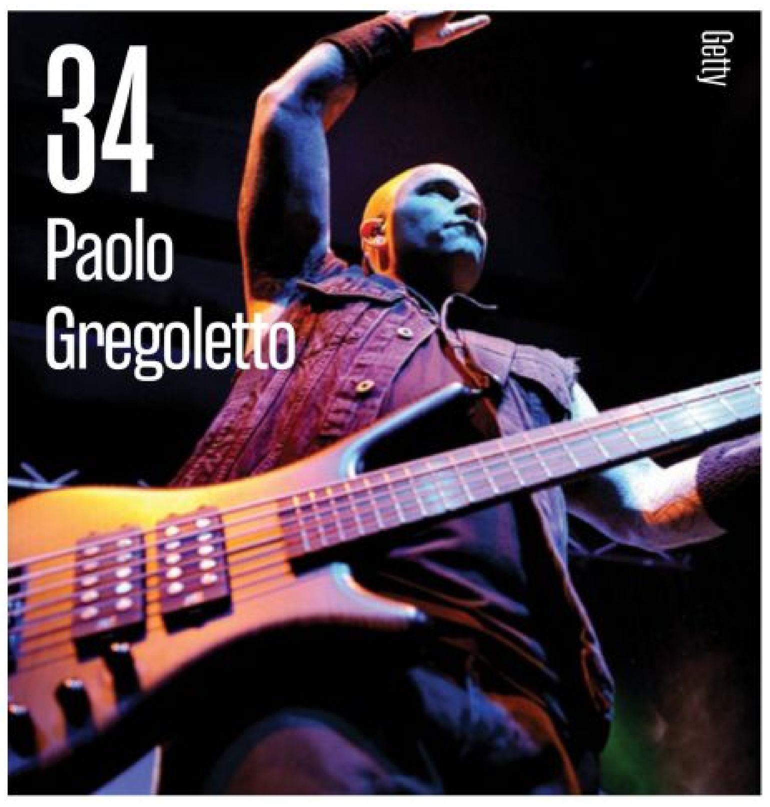
26 Behind the scenes at Fender HQ
Back when you could still travel, we went for an exclusive tour of Fender's Custom Shop in Corona, California. So who are the easier customers to deal with – guitarists or bassists? Chris Fleming, Director of Custom Operations, has an answer that may surprise some of you...

30 Pass Notes: Michael McKeegan
In our new Pass Notes series, a prominent bass player gives you the tips you'll need to get to the top and stay there. This month, it's Therapy?'s Michael McKeegan on aging gracefully and giving the best performance you can

32 Margaret LaBombard
We delve deep inside New York's bass community with Slyboots bassist Margaret LaBombard

34 Paolo Gregoletto, Trivium
The Floridian metal master returns with *What The Dead Men Say* – an album stuffed full of bass goodness


26 Fender HQ


34 Paolo Gregoletto

Getty

Lessons

10 Theory Of The Month
The Lydian Dominant scale, you say? It's Nik Preston's middle name...

50 BEGINNER
Continuing his easy lessons in looping, the great Steve Lawson talks building more complex arrangements without having to overstretch ourselves

54 INTERMEDIATE
Master bassist Phil Mann teaches us to tighten up our tapping technique

60 ADVANCED
Stu Clayton discusses the impact of adding double stop pops to our bass-lines, and shows us how to nail them

Columns

8 Low Life
Tax The Heat bassist and BIMM Live Performance tutor Antonio Angotti advises on performing at local level

10 Bass Of Tomorrow
Planet Earth's most forward-thinking bass gear-makers interviewed by Hywel Davies

14 First Bass
A section where we introduce new, new-ish or otherwise noteworthy bass players. Mark our words, the Geddy Lees and Carol Kayes of the future are here...

18 Star Bass
Let's celebrate the great and less-great recordings of a given star. This month, it's reggae master David 'JAH Bass' Goldfine

66 The Last Note
Dan Veall signs off with a solution to all our bass problems. This month: reverb pedals

THE LOWDOWN

News and views from the bass world, collated by *BGM*'s team of intrepid newshounds

SILVER MACHINE

Fender unleash a glittering new PJ and a finger-friendly Player Series Mustang

Fender continues its additions to its Precision and Jazz range, with two new models catching our eye. First, there's the option to build a **P-Bass in Inca Silver** over at the Mod Shop, where for $150 or equivalent you can add V-Mod PJ pickups. Who doesn't need an extra kick at the bridge end, after all? The US Mod Shop prices begin at $1,699, so if you're interested in a midmarket-value Fender bass and fancy designing one yourself, you know what to do.

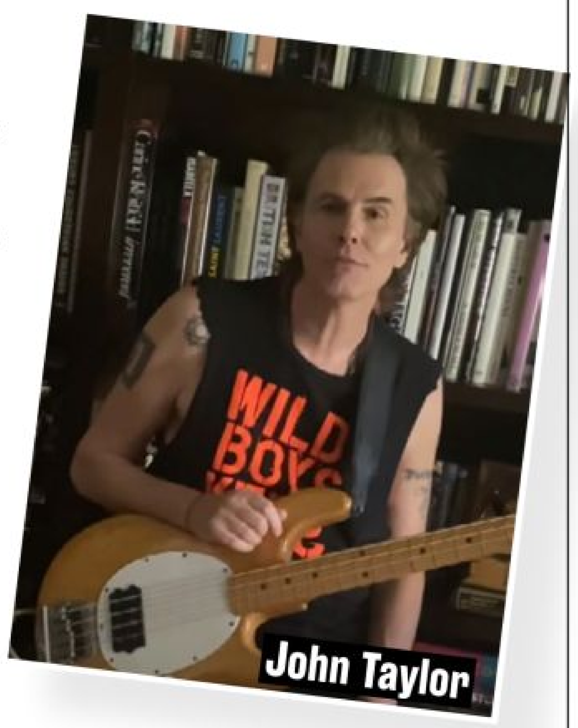
In other news, remember Fender's affordable Mexican Standard bass range? Us too, although it's now a part of Big F history, having been replaced in 2018 by the popular Player Series, designed with financially prudent bass players in mind. A new **Mustang Bass PJ** has joined the range and can be snapped up for $649, which is good news for fans of these short-scale classics. Available in Sienna Sunburst, Aged Natural and Firemist Gold, the new Mustang will find homes with bassists equipped with small hands or who are just sick of regular scales, as we all are from time to time. Vintage-style Fender tuners, a disc string tree, a four-bolt neck plate and four-saddle bridge keep the old-school flavours front and centre.

https://shop.fender.com

Guy Pratt

LOCKING DOWN THE GROOVES

Star bassists have taken to the web during lockdown


John Taylor

Gigs have been cancelled and sessions are infrequent during the current end-phase of the pandemic, but like the rest of the world, bass players have taken the opportunity to share their wisdom online. These include **Guy Pratt**, whose Lockdown Licks includes playthroughs of his iconic lines for Madonna, Pink Floyd and more, and **John Taylor**, whose rendition of Duran Duran's immediately-recognisable 'Rio' line in the Stone Love Bass Odyssey series finally showed us where we've been getting it wrong all these years. Furthermore, last issue's cover star **Mark King** – performing Level 42's 'Too Much Time', while wearing a sailor's hat – reminded us to keep smiling. We'll get through this, and when we do, bass will still be the coolest instrument ever invented.

Mark King

IN THE GROOVES

Albums rocking our office this month

NEW ALBUM

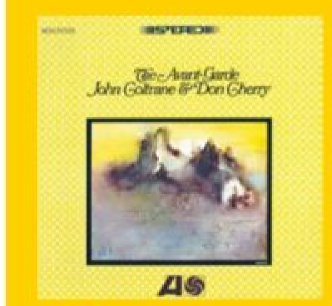
Mabel, High Expectations (2019)

Three bassists (Josh Werner, Tre Jean-Marie and Al Shux) supply the low notes on the debut album by newcomer Mabel. Sure, it's slick R&B for teenagers, but even the most curmudgeonly bassist can't deny the power of those grooves.

OLD ALBUM

Eagle Eye Cherry, Desireless (1997)

Mabel's uncle Eagle Eye had a way with grooves himself 'back in the day', performing like a maestro on his debut album and tying in serendipitously with this month's 'three generations of music' concept for In The Grooves.



REALLY OLD ALBUM

Don Cherry and John Coltrane, The Avant-Garde (1966)

On this astonishing record, bass players Charlie Haden and Percy Heath show more talent than 10 of the rest of us. The way that Cherry, Mabel's grandfather, weaves around the arrangement is an object lesson.

ON THE DOWN LOW

GAS*-sufferers will perk up at this new gear, headed your way right now

Sire, makers of the affordable Marcus Miller bass range, has announced a new model for the summer. The P10 is a beefed-up version of their P7, which like its predecessor, has a roasted flame maple neck, an alder body featuring a flame maple top, and Marcus Premium Revolution pickups. These, combined with a Marcus Heritage-3 preamp and controls including an active/passive toggle and a middle/mid-frequency dual pot, should produce a highly tweakable tone performance. It's set to cost $1499.

Schecter Guitar Research has announced four- and five-string versions of its Ultra Bass series, now with EMG TBHZ pickups, dual volume and tone controls. The mahogany-bodied basses will also boast Schecter Custom bridges, thin C neck profiles and carbon-fibre reinforcement for the five-piece maple and mahogany necks. Street prices should be $999 for the four-string and $1099 for the five.

Warwick has announced brushed metal housings for their MEC bass pickups in gold, black and silver finishes. "Available in this series will be P, J, PJ, MM and soapbar-style pickups for four-, five- and six-string basses, both as a set and individually," they tell us. "Their sound and pickup quality corresponds to the current MEC pickups, which are known to enjoy a very good reputation in the market." You'll pay between $129 and $270.

Finally, **ESP** has added a new wood option to its LTD bass series: a burled poplar top in a Black Natural Burst Satin finish. Ranging from $749 to $849 in price, the D series feature seven-piece maple and jatoba necks with mahogany bodies, roasted jatoba fingerboards, ESP Designed SB pickups and Grover tuners. Expect reviews of all these goodies as soon as we get hold of them.

***Gear Acquisition Syndrome**

Warwick
Sire Schecter ESP

LOW LIFE

You've got to make it at local level before you hit the big leagues, advises Tax The Heat bassist and BIMM Live Performance tutor Antonio Angotti...

BIMM INSTITUTE

Hello, bass players! In this issue, I want to go all the way back to the beginning, where most of us commence our journeys into live performance – when we were gigging for the first time as part of our local music scenes. This prospect can be quite daunting, but I assure you that it's an experience like no other. For all of you who enjoy playing their local venues, or even who are yet to take the leap to performing live in public, here are my top tips to help you get going!

DON'T WORRY – YOU'LL FIND THE RIGHT BAND

We've all been at this point, figuring out how we take our bedroom playing to the stage – and what needs to happen for this to become a reality. For most of us, it's a case of establishing or joining bands as a way to start gigging. This in itself can be an initial obstacle, but it's now easier than ever to connect with like-minded musicians. The most important piece of advice here is to practise your live show together and rehearse regularly. Rehearsal is an entirely different process to individual practice, because it helps you to lock in with other instruments, adapt to time and feel, learn parts or changes quickly, memorise material and structures, develop your live sound and build many other important skills. It also allows you to gel as bandmates – and it is this chemistry that can make or break a band's live show.

EXPERIENCE YOUR MUSIC SCENE

I fondly remember my early days of gigging as a teenager: I was attending local shows as much as I was playing them. The point I want to make is that valuable lessons come from being an audience member and an active part of your local scene. Not only are you meeting people who could help you on your journey, but it's a great opportunity to check out how other people play live. I always used to chat to the other bassists and swap tips on gear or bass-lines, or even arrange a gig in the future together. I would also be looking at other band's stagecraft – and considering how I might be able to borrow some of it for my own performance.

MAKE SURE YOU PROVE YOUR WORTH

Once you're up there, it's a case of putting everything into action. Most performing musicians will attest that their first gigs were not their best work, but remember, this is a journey – and you get better by doing it more and more. I appreciate that being a part of a band line-up isn't necessarily everyone's sole aim, so another route into performing in public is via local jam nights. This calls for a broader set of skills as you'll need a wide repertoire under your fingers – and the ability to improvise and/or transpose in order to deliver a solid performance. But if you do a good job, you may well get the call for more live opportunities.

BUILD YOUR REPUTATION

If you were to divide into segments the key elements of what it takes to become a 'successful' live musician, the actual bass playing is only some of it – I wouldn't even say it is a majority share. There are many things that make for a good reputation, and one that takes you from local to national or international stages. This includes your capacity to be a reliable and likeable person: people skills go a long way. Networking is also crucial, so being a functioning member of your local scene will help you to get more gigs. You should also not neglect the visual side of your performance – static players will often be disregarded for those who are more engaging and who bring an exciting spark to the show. Keep a handle on those essentials, and you'll be gigging regularly in no time!

Do you have any questions surrounding live performance? Message me at @MrA_TaxTheBass and I'll broach them in an upcoming issue. Catch you all next time!

"NETWORKING IS CRUCIAL, SO BE A FUNCTIONING MEMBER OF YOUR LOCAL SCENE"

Jonny Coffin, **Coffin Cases**

BASS OF **TOMORROW**

Bass case warlock Jonny Coffin of Coffin Cases has been making sarcophagi to die for over the past 25 years. We sit down for a grave chat with him

Words: Hywel Davies

Don't you just hate it when somebody comes up with an idea so genius that you can't help but kick yourself for not coming up with it first? Jonny Coffin did that over 25 years ago – and what started as a one-off guitar case has grown into one of the most recognisable brands in the world. How did this ball get rolling, we ponder?

"In the beginning, I had a handmade coffin case that I was gigging around with in LA, in the late 80s and early 90s," he recalls. "I had guitarists and bassists asking me, 'Where did you get that case?', so after a few hundred requests I decided to look into registering the patents and trademarks. I had a small wood shop in my garage to hand-make custom orders for clients, but I always had a bigger vision for the company, so I'm still making cases and other musical products a quarter of a century later."

"IMAGINE A KID 50 YEARS FROM NOW PULLING A COFFIN CASE OUT AND SAYING, 'WHAT *IS* THIS?'"

What are the challenges of this making coffin-shaped cases, we ask? "For me, a coffin-shaped guitar case actually makes a lot of sense," he explains. "A lot of thought went into its design, because it's not an easy shape to produce. I started with custom hardwood cases and transitioned into an affordable consumer line. It was important to me that we still keep the integrity and style of my original handmade cases, so we still use our trademarked diamond-quilted velvet in the cases for added protection for the instrument. The coffin aesthetic holds and protects the bass so well that there's no reason to change it. Plus, the coffin shape is timeless."

Many of the biggest bands in the world turn to Coffin to ensure that their instruments 'rest in one peace', as it were, while on tour. Having Slash, Metallica and Rolling Stone Keith Richards on your roster is impressive, to say the least. However, rubbing shoulder to shoulder with rock royalty hasn't made him lose sight of the big picture. How important is it to maintain a healthy relationship with the music community on a local level?

"It's a priority," Jonny says. "It's what we built our business on. We support local musicians everywhere, and offer endorsement deals for bands who are as passionate about music as we are. Everyone has something to offer, and we recognise that. I see the level of talent out there from such a large number of men, women, boys and girls, and it blows me away. As a musician, I think we all have a common bond and we need to support each other through whatever outlets we have. As a company, we love promoting talent through our channels, new or established."

He declares: "Coffin will be around forever. I love to imagine a kid 50 years from now pulling a Coffin Case out of their great-grandparents' closet with a bass inside and saying 'Holy shit... What *is* this?'"

www.coffingear.com

THEORY OF THE MONTH

The Lydian Dominant scale, you say? It's Nik Preston's middle name...

Welcome back! In our previous look at the Lydian Dominant, we established that it has applications over dominant chords which appear not to be resolving. This included dominant chords which resolve down by a semitone, for example D♭7 to C, and also dominant chords which resolved up a tone, such as B♭7 to C. We've also looked at its place relative to its parent scale – it's the IV mode of melodic minor, so rests on the fourth degree. As this scale occurs on the fourth degree of its parent scale, it's a great choice for dominant chords built on the same degree. This is a common harmonic movement, but tread carefully from a stylistic perspective – as it may not be appropriate for every setting. This month, we're taking a deeper look into the scale itself, and exploring some approaches designed to improve our fretboard familiarity and aural skills.

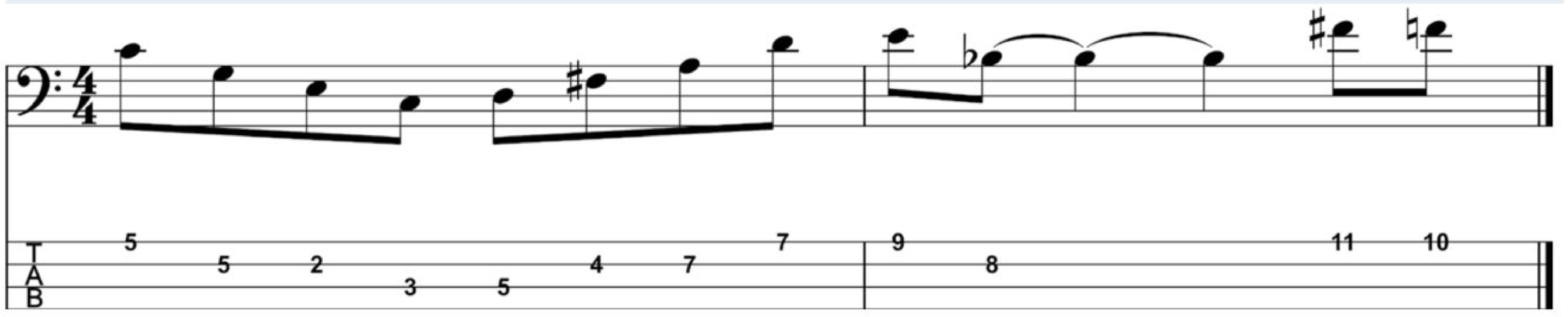
Triad coupling, or triad pairs, in the context of Lydian Dominant – and indeed Melodic Minor harmony in general – offers some interesting triadic relationships, as every type of tertial triad is present: Major, minor, augmented and diminished. **Example 1** shows us two major triads built on the first two degrees. **Example 2** simply features two diminished triads on the third and raised fourth degrees. **Example 3** shows us two minor triads built from the fifth and sixth degrees – and **Example 4** illustrates the augmented triad found on the flattened seventh degree before resolving to the C7.

While we may know the chord types found in any parent scale, it is beneficial to have a fundamental knowledge of the chord types found on degrees of every **mode**. Yes, that can sound like a daunting workload – but exercises such as these definitely go some way to familiarising us quickly. When utilised alongside transcription, transposition and improvisation, we can make huge strides in a relatively short amount of time. **Example 5** demonstrates a slightly contrasting approach to that of triads, as it is predominantly comprised of larger intervals – types of fourth or fifth. By focusing on these larger intervals we can access some less obvious, more modern sounds. Quartal and quintal harmony has been with us for a long time, but the types of lines we can derive from a focus on these wider intervals are definitely on the more modern end of the spectrum.

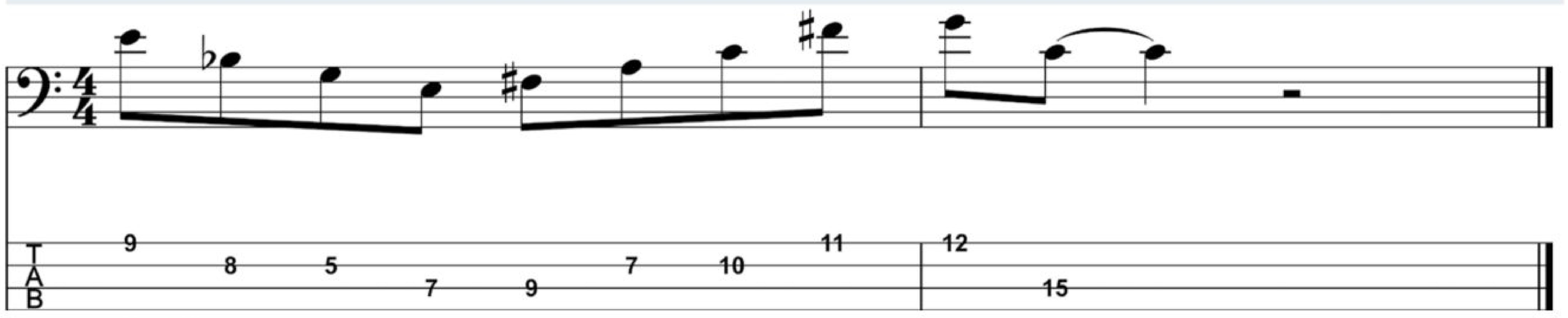
My advice when using these approaches for scale familiarity is to practise them as slowly as you need in order to be able to name the chord tone or extension you are playing. For example, when you play the third note in Exercise 5, you would be thinking '9th' as opposed to just 'D'. This knowledge is purely acquired – anyone can develop it, and it will pay dividends.

As always, take it slowly, have fun, and leave the practice room with more options than you went in with!

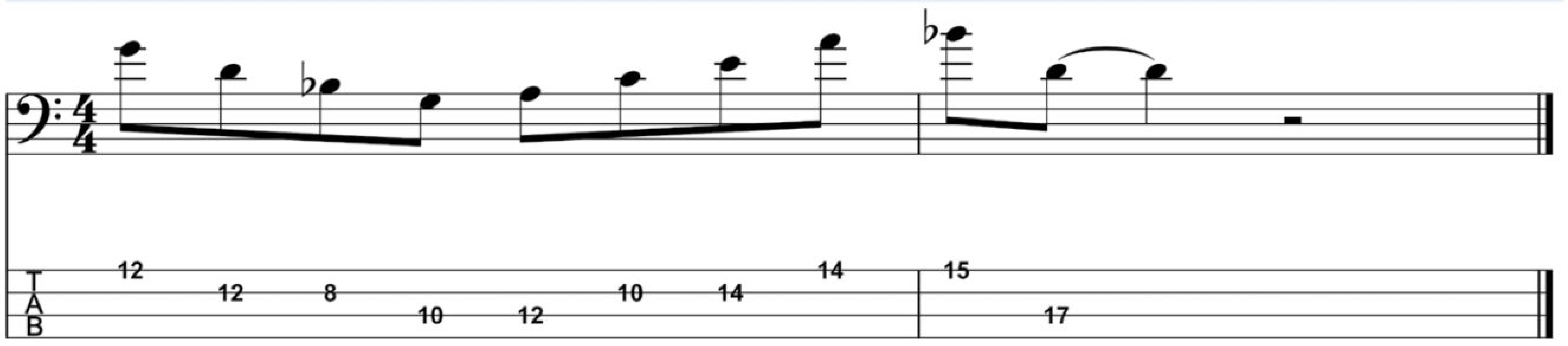
Example 1



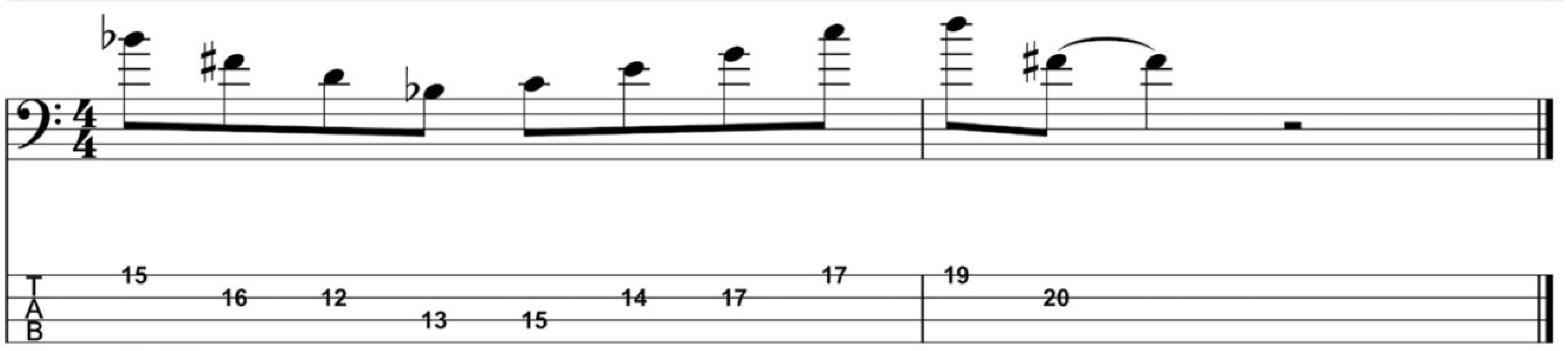
Example 2



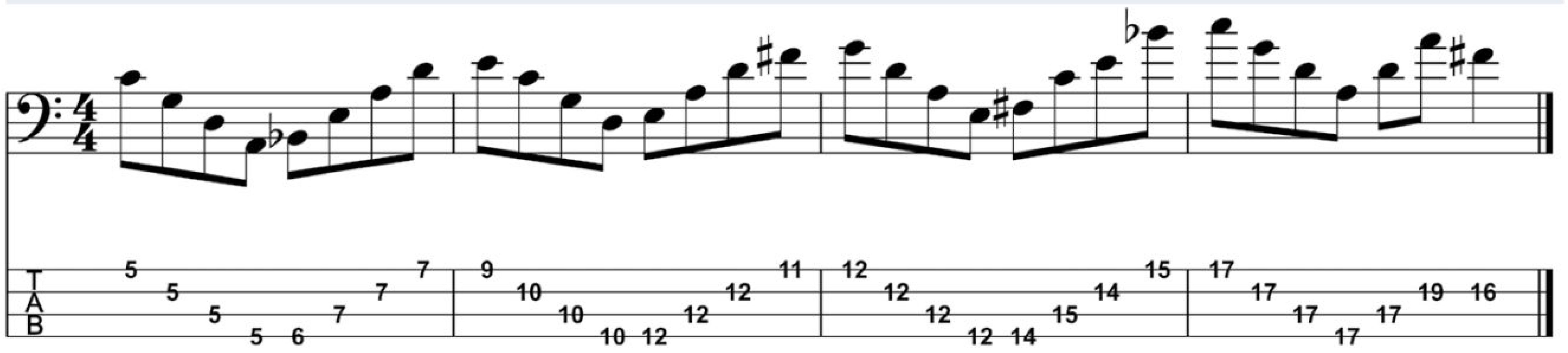
Example 3



Example 4



Example 5



PROMENADE MUSIC

01524 410 202
www.promenademusic.co.uk

4 String Basses

15278 - Bass Collection Jive Bass Black n Blocks
15510 - Bass Collection Rhythm Stick, Sunburst
10067 - Brian May Bass in Cherry with Gig Bag

Cort

16343 - Cort Action 4 PJ Bass, Open Pore Walnut
19278 - Cort Action Junior Bass, Black OPB
19738 - Cort Action Junior Bass, Black OPB, Used
19701 - Cort Action Junior Bass, Walnut OPW
16156 - Cort Action PJ OPB, Open Pore Black
16157 - Cort Action PJ, Open Pore Black Cherry
16323 - Cort Action 4 String Lefty, Black
16769 - Cort B4 FL Plus AS OPN Fretless Bass
16608 - Cort B4 Plus Artisan 4-String Lefthanded
19640 - Cort B4FL MHPZ Fretless Bass
12807 - Cort Jeff Berlin Rithimic 4 String Bass
15242 - Cort Jeff Berlin Rithimic 5 String Bass
19150 - Danelectro 56 Single Cutaway Bass, Black

Fender

18725 - Fender Am Elite Jazz, Sat Jade Pearl Met
19643 - Fender Am Orig. 70s Jazz, Vintage White
18492 - Fender Am Performer Jazz Bass Penny
17076 - Fender American Pro P Bass, Sunburst
18300 - Fender Classic Series 60s Jazz L, OWhite
16298 - Fender Flea Jazz Bass, Shell Pink, Used
19238 - Fender Flea Active Jazz Bass Silver
8927 - Fender Geddy Lee Jazz Bass in Sunburst
18784 - Fender Ltd Ed Ash Am. Prof. Jazz Bass
19570 - Fender Player Jazz Bass, Sunburst
18095 - Fender Player Jazz Bass, Black
19472 - Fender Player Precision Bass, Sunburst
19503 - Fender Vintera '60s Jazz Bass, Firemist
19316 - Fender Vintera Jazz Bass, Sunburst
18423 - Godin Shifter Classic 4 Vint.Burst HGRN
19600 - Gretsch G2220 Junior Jet Bass, Sunburst
11189 - Hofner HCT Shorty Bass, Black
19420 - Hofner HCT Violin Bass, Sunburst
12188 - Hofner Ignition Violin Bass, Sunburst
17063 - Italia Maranello Bass, Black Sparkle
18208 - Italia Torino Bass, Trans Blue, Used
19216 - Jackson Bass Minion JS1XM, Snow White
19565 - Marco Bass N1 TFL 4-String, Orange, Used
19702 - Markbass MB JP Black Chrome 4 GD PF

MUSIC MAN

16236 - MusicMan Caprice, Heritage Tobacco Burst
19116 - Musicman Cutlass Bass, Diamond Blue
18253 - MusicMan Stingray 4, Blue Pearl, Used
19460 - MusicMan Stingray 4 Bass with 3 EQ Blue
18114 - NS Design WAV4 Double Bass Trans Black

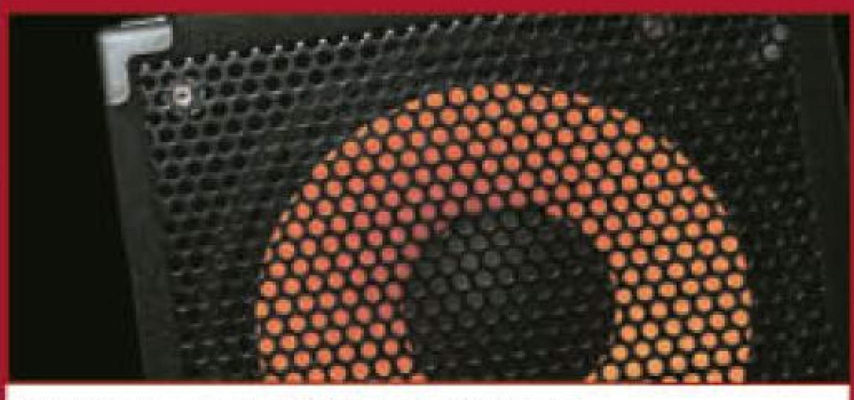
Rickenbacker

18228 - Rickenbacker 4003, Midnight Blue
6919 - Rickenbacker 4003, Mapleglo
16421 - Rickenbacker 4003 Bass, Fireglo
7890 - Rickenbacker 4003, Jetglo
18077 - Rickenbacker 4003S Bass Guitar Mapleglo
18079 - Rickenbacker 4003S Bass Guitar Fireglo
18083 - Rockbass Streamer LX4 Fretless, Blk Used
19776 - Sandberg California Cherry Sunburst Used
19518 - Schecter Diamond Stiletto Ex. Bass, Used

Squier

18933 - Squier C. Vibe 60s Jazz Bass Fretless
19117 - Squier Classic Vibe 60s Jazz Bass DBlue
19067 - Squier CV 60s P. Bass, Olympic White
14490 - Vintage LV4 Lefthanded 4 String
14407 - Vintage LVJ74 Lefthanded Bass Guitar, Natural
17084 - Vintage Reissued VJ74 Bass Natural Ash
5634 - Yamaha BB714BS Billy Sheehan, Lava Red
17877 - Yamaha TRBX604FM 4 String, Matte Amber

Bass Cabinets



13640 - Aguilar SL112 Bass Cabinet
16800 - BLUGuitar Nanocab
18851 - Bergantino HDN-112 Bass Cab
18852 - Bergantino HDN-210 Bass Cab
18855 - Bergantino HDN-212 Bass Cab
18853 - Bergantino HDN-410 Bass Cab
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package
13195 - Eden EX210 Bass Cab
16054 - Eich 110XS Bass Cabinet 4 Ohm
16055 - Eich 110XS Bass Cabinet 8 Ohm
16041 - Eich 112XS Bass Cabinet 4 Ohms
16042 - Eich 112XS Bass Cabinet 8 Ohms
16075 - Eich 115L Bass Cabinet
16052 - Eich 115XS Bass Cabinet 4 Ohm
16053 - Eich 115XS Bass Cabinet 8 Ohm
16039 - Eich 1210S Bass Cabinet
16040 - Eich 1210S Bass Cabinet
16071 - Eich 210M Bass Cabinet
16069 - Eich 212L Bass Cabinet
16070 - Eich 212M Bass Cabinet
16048 - Eich 212S Bass Cabinet 4 Ohm
16050 - Eich 212S Bass Cabinet 8 Ohm
16068 - Eich 410L Bass Cabinet
16067 - Eich 610L Bass Cabinet
16061 - Eich 612XL Bass Cab
16065 - Eich 810L Bass Cabinet
16321 - Gallien Krueger CX115 Bass Cabinet
16444 - Gallien Krueger CX210 Bass Cab
16320 - Gallien Krueger MB210 Bass Amp Combo

Markbass

5476 - Mark Bass STD104HR (4x10)
6241 - Mark Bass STD102HF (2x10)
6242 - Mark Bass STD104HF (4x10)
5477 - Mark Bass STD151HR (1x15)
9033 - Markbass Traveler 121H Bass Ext Cab
9034 - Markbass Traveler 151 P Bass Guitar Cab
4733 - Mark Bass Traveller TRV102P (2x10)
16013 - Markbass 123 Alain Caron Bass Cab
16014 - Markbass CMD Super K1 Alain Caron
17732 - Markbass Marcus Miller Cab 102
5431 - Mark Bass NY121 New York 1x12 Bass Cab
10412 - Markbass NY122 2x12 Bass Cab
10409 - Markbass NY151 1x15 Bass Cab
10410 - Markbass NY151 RJ 1x15" Randy Jackson
15272 - Markbass New York 122 Ninja Bona Cab

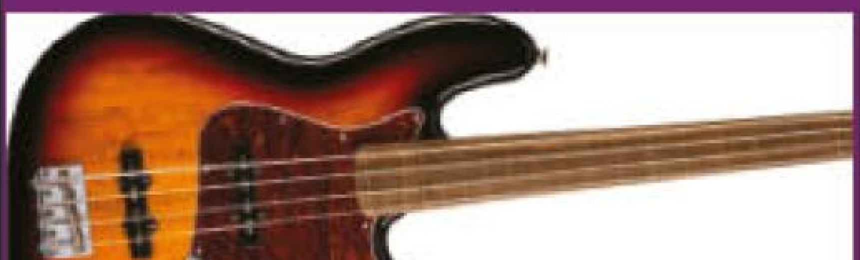
Orange

6259 - Orange OBC115 (1x15)
10266 - Orange OBC210 Bass Guitar Speaker Cab
6260 - Orange OBC410H (4x10)
5241 - Orange OBC810 (8x10)
16856 - Trace Elliot 1x10 Elf Cab
19686 - Trace Elliot TE28E 2x8? bass cabinet

Acoustic Basses

19148 - Breedlove Solo Electro Acoustic Bass
10498 - Ortega D Walker Acoustic Bass, Black
19342 - Ovation B778TX Electro Acoustic Bass
12180 - Protection Racket Ac. Bass Case Dlx
15117 - Takamine GB30CE Electro Acoustic

Fretless Basses



16769 - Cort B4 FL Plus AS OPN Fretless Bass
18083 - Rockbass Streamer LX4 , Blk Used
18933 - Squier C. Vibe 60s Jazz Bass Fretless

Bass Combos

13577 - AER Amp III Bass Amp Combo
5627 - AER Amp One (200W, 1x10)

Eden

13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package
16046 - Eich BC112 Bass Combo
19163 - Eich BC112 PRO Bass Combo
16028 - Eich BC112 Bass Combo

Fender

13497 - Fender Rumble 100 Bass Amp Combo
4238 - Fender Rumble 15 (15W, 1x8)
12745 - Fender Rumble 200 Bass Combo
15113 - Fender Rumble 25 Bass Amp Combo
13083 - Fender Rumble 40 Bass Amp Combo
15114 - Fender Rumble 500 Bass Amp Combo

Gallien-Krueger

16765 - Gallien Krueger MB110 Bass Combo
16445 - Gallien Krueger MB112 Bass Combo
16446 - Gallien Krueger MB150S/112 Combo

Markbass

9004 - Markbass 121 Lite Alain Caron Combo
6239 - Mark Bass CMD102P Bass Combo
5472 - Mark Bass CMD151P J Berlin (300W)
5429 - Mark Bass Covers For Mark Bass Amps
6240 - Mark Bass Mini CMD121P (300W, 1x12)
19641 - Mark Bass Mini CMD121P, 300W, Used
5475 - Mark Bass CMD121H (300W, 1x12)
18371 - Markbass Marcus Miller CMD101 Micro60
18372 - Markbass Marcus Miller CMD 102 250
18370 - Markbass Marcus Miller CMD 102 500
9940 - Markbass Mini CMD 151 Jeff Berlin
16764 - Markbass 102 250 Richard Bona
19729 - Markbass Ninja 102-500 Combo
9938 - MicroMark 801 Bass Combo

Orange

15715 - Orange Crush Bass 100 Combo
15716 - Orange Crush Bass 25 Combo
15714 - Orange Crush Bass 50 Combo
19512 - Orange Crush Bass 50 Combo Used
15111 - Orange OB1 300 Combo

Roland

4435 - Roland Cube 20XL BASS (20W, 1x8)
18035 - Roland Cube CB60XL Bass Amp

Electric & Silent Basses

4910 - Bridge Cetus Electric Double Bass
5110 - NS Design NXT Electric Double Bass
14482 - NS Design NXT Electric Double Bass,Blk
16847 - NS Design NXTA Upright Bass, Active
14014 - Yamaha SLB100 Silent Upright Bass
6360 - Yamaha SLB200 Silent Double Bass

Bass Heads

14618 - Aguilar Tone Hammer 500 Bass Amp Head
18848 - Bergantino Bi Amp
18854 - Bergantino Custom Padded Carry Bag
18850 - Bergantino Forte Bass Amplifier
19763 - Bergantino Forté HP Lightweight Bass Amp
13566 - Eden EGRW1264 Head & Cab Package
16044 - Eich T1000 Bass Amp
16043 - Eich T300 Bass Amp
16027 - Eich T500 Bass Amp
16026 - Eich T900 Bass Amp

Gallien-Krueger

19468 - GALLIEN KRUEGER LEGACY 500 Head
16318 - Gallien Krueger MB500 Bass Amp Head
16319 - Gallien Krueger MB500 Fusion Bass Amp H
17147 - Gallien Krueger MB800 Bass Head
14828 - Mark Bass Nano Mark 300 Bass Amp Head
10408 - MarkBass Bass MultiAmp Stereo
6243 - Mark Bass Little Mark III Bass Head 500w
19081 - Mark Bass Little Mark III Bass Head USED
9035 - Markbass Little Mark III Tube Bass Head
5244 - MarkBass Little Mark Tube 800, 800W
9256 - Markbass Big Bang 500W Bass Head
19484 - Markbass Evo 1 Bass Amp Head
17254 - Markbass Little Marcus 1000 Bass Amp
17252 - Markbass Little Marcus 250 Bass Amp Head
17009 - Markbass Little Marcus 500 Bass Amp Head
17010 - Markbass Little Marcus 800 Bass Amp Head
9941 - Markbass Little Mark 250 Head Black
15271 - Markbass Little Mark Ninja Bona Head
19282 - Markbass Little Mark Vintage Bass Amp Head
9944 - Markbass MultiAmp
15151 - Markbass Randy Jackson TTE501 Bass Head
15110 - Orange 4 Stroke 500 Bass Amp
6261 - Orange AD200 MK3
8231 - Orange Dark Terror Valve Guitar Head
19674 - Orange Little Bass Thing Bass Amp Head
5351 - Orange Terror Bass 500 TB500
16531 - Trace Elliot Elf 200 Watt Bass Amp Head

5 String Basses

19147 - Cort A5 Plus SCMS Open Pore Natural
14312 - Cort Action V-DLX, Cherry Red Sunburst
13803 - Cort B5 5 String, Tobacco Sunburst, Used
16526 - Cort GB75 5 String Bass, Black
10213 - Cort GB75WBL 5 String Bass, White Blonde
18731 - Cort GB75JJ 5 String Bass Aqua Blue
16397 - Cort GB75JJ Amber Glossy 5 String Bass
16766 - Ibanez SR30TH5PII Premium, 5-String Bass
18254 - MTD Saratoga Deluxe, 3 Tone Sunburst
19381 - Marleaux MBass 5 String Bass, Burl Top
19727 - Music Man StingRay 5 Special Burnt Apple
14608 - Overwater Progress Deluxe, Pre-Owned
19775 - Shine 5 String Bass, Trans Blue, Used

Spector

11196 - Spector Bass Legend 5 Classic Blk Cherry
19735 - Spector Bass Rebop 5DLX Blck Cherry
16329 - Spector Coda 5 Pro Black Cherry Stain
16773 - Spector Coda 5 Pro Trans Black
12406 - Spector Legend Custom 5 String, Amber
13214 - Spector Legend Custom 5 String, Black
11195 - Spector SP5BK Performer 5 in Black
16776 - Spector SP5BK Performer 5, Black Cherry
19158 - Sterling by MusicMan SubRay 5 Bass, HBS
8999 - Yamaha RBX5A2 5 String Bass, Black
13193 - Yamaha TRB1005J Bass, Black
16000 - Yamaha TRBX505 Bass
17879 - Yamaha TRBX605FM 5 String Dark Red Burst

For full guitar details, pricing and photos, enter the number next to each guitar model into our SKU search facility on the website.

FIRST BASS

A killer section of the mag devoted to new, new-ish or just amazing bass players

ALEX RYAN

HOZIER

What was your way into bass?
My father taught me some basics when I was 11 or so. My older brother had taken up the guitar around that time, so it seemed natural to opt for the complementary instrument. From there, I just started learning basslines from the songs I was into. My first bass was a red P/J Yamaha four-string. A good starter, for sure.

What bass gear do you currently use?
I unofficially endorse Skjold basses. I play their Firedrake and Skjoldslayer, which are masterfully custom-made in the US by Pete Skjold. My custom Firedrake has a gorgeously-figured marblewood top and a bloodwood board and ramp, with a couple of custom touches. I tend to favour five-strings – the added depth can really contribute a lot in certain circumstances. I also officially endorse Gallien-Krueger MB Fusion 800 amps, and in addition I use a Darkglass B7K Ultra and Duality fuzz, plus a TC Electronic Polytuner.

What's the best advice you can give us about playing bass?
Never play your instrument; always play music. I think it tends to be overlooked that a bass-player's primary role is a harmonic one. We have the final say on what the nature of any given vertical sonority might be, and we can imply function and structure accordingly. Of course, rhythm is a huge factor in almost all styles and instances of music, but this is not exclusive to our instrument. Rhythm is everywhere. Functional pitch must be rendered correctly if it is to be understood, and our harmony is always defined from the ground up.

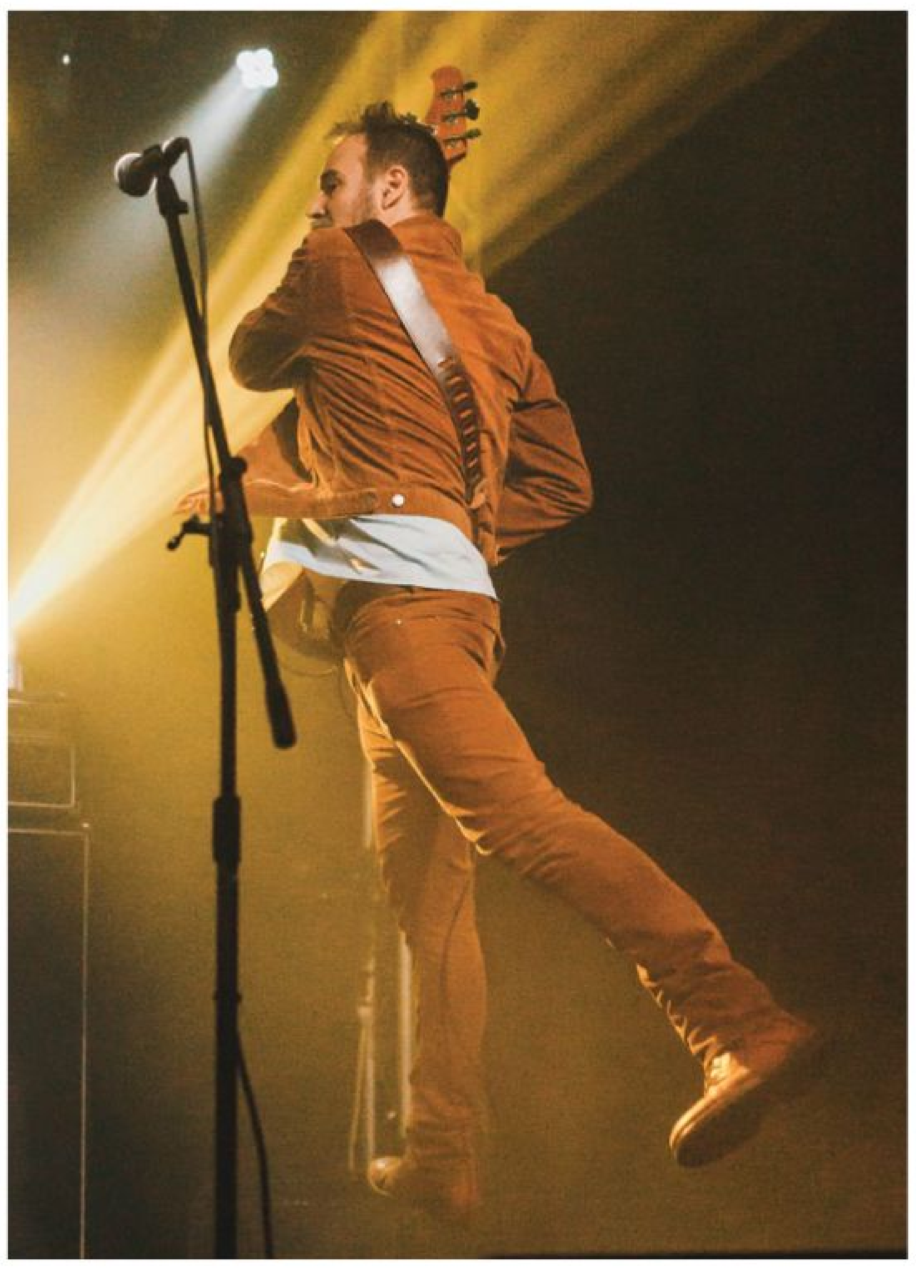
Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
Tough one. It's very hard to judge a player based purely on accessible examples; I feel the best way to truly gauge a player's worth is to experience them in a scenario where they have little or no control – such as depping for another player on an unfamiliar gig, or fulfilling a producer's wishes in the studio – and seeing if they sink or swim.

What are your current projects?
I've been playing with Andrew Hozier for about eight years. We won't be touring again too soon but I'm sure there'll be more music recorded and released before long.

www.hozier.com

CHRISTOPHER HOFFEE

THE WHITE BUFFALO



What was your way into bass?
My way into bass was atypical, I think. I began as a lead guitarist, then a singer-songwriter, recording and producing my own albums. Bass-playing became a necessity for my music project, but after releasing my albums, others came to me for recording, production and multi-instrumental skills. Bass has taken on a greater and greater part of my life, until now it's a major part of my livelihood.

What bass gear do you currently use?
I use a Music Man 4HD Stingray, tuned BEAD. It's useful in songs that are in C and D, especially in the three-piece band I'm in. I use the Darkglass 900 amp, which is wonderful for all the touring I do. The sound, power, and ease of taking it on an airplane as a carry-on is indispensable. I pair that with Darkglass's new 2x12 1000-watt cabinet with Neo speakers, and I can do any gig without a large footprint, or heavy travel weight.

What's the best advice you've ever been given about playing bass?
There are a few bassists that I really admire, Carol Kaye and Tina Weymouth among them. They're so melodically interesting. Carol thought of percussion rhythms and Tina thought of horn parts in their playing. Those ideas helped me break out of what a bass 'should' do.

Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
It's a mistake to say that anyone is the greatest of anything, but what James Jamerson brought to a song is justification enough. To me, the song is everything. There's the recording, and then there's the live show, and what you play should be different, as the soundscape and energy has changed. I don't think James really ever played the same thing – it's what he was feeling.

What are your current projects?
Check out our new album *On The Widow's Walk*, out now on Spinefarm Records.

Instagram: @atomorr

ALICE THOMAS

TALIA

What was your way into bass?
I used to play double bass as a kid. When I was 18, I tried to play guitar but I realised that I was only enjoying rhythm guitar and playing along with the drums, so I switched to bass. It was a five-string Jazz. I was so proud when I went into this tiny shop in Paris and said 'I want this one!' because five strings seemed so exotic to me. My bass teacher then told me I should have bought a four-string to begin with, but even so, I sold my Jazz to buy a five-string Warwick. My first band played metal and the guitarists tuned to E♭, but I didn't want to tune my bass down, so I used the fifth string to reach the lower notes.

What bass gear do you currently use?
I play a Nash PB 63 and a 1988 Fender Precision. We also have a '73 Precision that I only use in the studio. I have a Darkglass B3K and my amp is a Markbass Little Rocker 500 head with a Gallien Krueger 2x15 cab. We have an endorsement with DR Strings – their strings are great for my bass.

What's the best advice you can give us about playing bass?
Practice, practice, practice – and stop telling female bass players that our bass is bigger than we are.

Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
I'm going with Duff McKagan, because he has great skills, great riffs, great basses and he's handsome – but there's definitely too many awesome bass players. I also like Mike Dirnt, Cone McCaslin, Melissa Auf Der Maur, Jennie Vee and Corine Marienneau from the French band Telephone, even if I hate this band. And it might seem a bit cheesy, but the bass player of the band Tantric, Jaron Gulino, is one of the most incredible bass players I've ever seen onstage. We toured with them in November 2019 and he was amazing every night.

What are your current projects?
Our band Talia's fifth album is out soon. We're French, but our record label, Pavement, is based in Chicago, so we try to come to the States as often as possible to tour.

www.facebook.com/taliarock

Mathias Fau

CHRISTINE LANUSSE

QANTICE, GRORR

What was your way into bass?
I got into bass playing for several reasons. I'm also a classical guitar player, and for me using a pick doesn't feel comfortable – so I'm more attracted to fingerpicking on metal strings, whether on acoustic guitar or electric bass, than by electric guitar. The second reason is that I used to listen to the Beatles a lot in the car with my parents as a kid; I really liked singing the bass-lines in my head. It was fascinating for me to listen to something which the whole tune was relying on. The third and real reason is that a local band needed a bass player. My first bass was a Samick – my parents and family helped me to buy it, and I can never thank them enough for this.

What bass gear do you currently use?
I play a multiscale Strandberg bass with Nordstrand Zenblades and preamp. I was lucky enough to try the Boden prototype back in 2016 – I'm so glad Ola Strandberg trusted me enough to send the bass over for me to test it. The Endurneck allows me to play effortlessly for hours. I also have a custom Elkine six-string with a Benedetti-Mercadal bridge pickup and EMG HZ neck pickup, and a Mion Elione short-scale five-string headless with Benedetti-Mercadal pickups and a Darkglass Tone Capsule. Effects are a Two Notes Torpedo CAB and a Darkglass Super Symmetry compressor, and amps are an Aguilar AG 500 and an Ampeg 8x10 cab.

What's the best advice you can give us about playing bass?
Listen to the music you're playing. Take care of yourself – your hands, back and mind. Play for yourself first and then other people will like it too.

Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
The world is full of amazing musicians who play very different kinds of music, so I don't have an answer for that, but my bass heroes are Chris Squire, Stanley Clarke, Mike Porcaro, Or Lubianiker and Michael Manring.

What are your current projects?
Qantice is a power prog-metal band with some Celtic and classical music influences. The band has three albums: the latest came out in 2019 and I recorded the bass on that one. Grorr is a more aggressive djent-sounding band with traditional Asian influences: I played on their fourth album. I'm also working on my own instrumental tunes with Sébastien Moulia on drums. I play the bass and classical guitar.

Instagram: @christinethefrenchie

18+

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

MISSY PERCIFIELD

POWERTRIBE

What was your way into bass?
I got into playing bass out of necessity. I was in a band that was managed by a Los Angeles-based company, and the manager kept firing the bass players. I was the lead singer. Finally, when we found the perfect bass player, the guy got deported. After months of that, I decided to take the bull by the horns. I gave myself one month to learn all our originals on the bass by booking a show, before I could even play. I have a classical piano background, so picking up the bass seemed pretty natural. I got up on stage and played that show, rocking the bass and singing at the same time. The bass was a three-quarter sized Junior Fender Bronco and I played it through a G-K bass rig. I sounded huge – all 4'10" of me. It was a riot. I knew then that it was gonna work for me. The manager didn't fire me, so here I am in this magazine, woo hoo!

What bass gear do you currently use?
I'm endorsed by Best Buy... just kidding. However, I was on one commercial for them. Actually I'm not endorsed by anyone, but I am partial to ESP basses, Tech 21 pedals, GHS strings and G-K amps... hint-hint, wink-wink. I play five-string. Why? Because I gotta have a big bottom and I love the deep sound.

What's the best advice you can give us about playing bass?
Find your voice on your instrument and be the best 'you' that you can be. Also, have a great drummer. Mine is awesome at laying a solid groove that makes me play bass better. I just plant my six-inch platforms and dig deep into the groove he provides. To me, when we're having fun, we display confidence, so the key to playing bass well is confidence... But that starts with a great drummer.

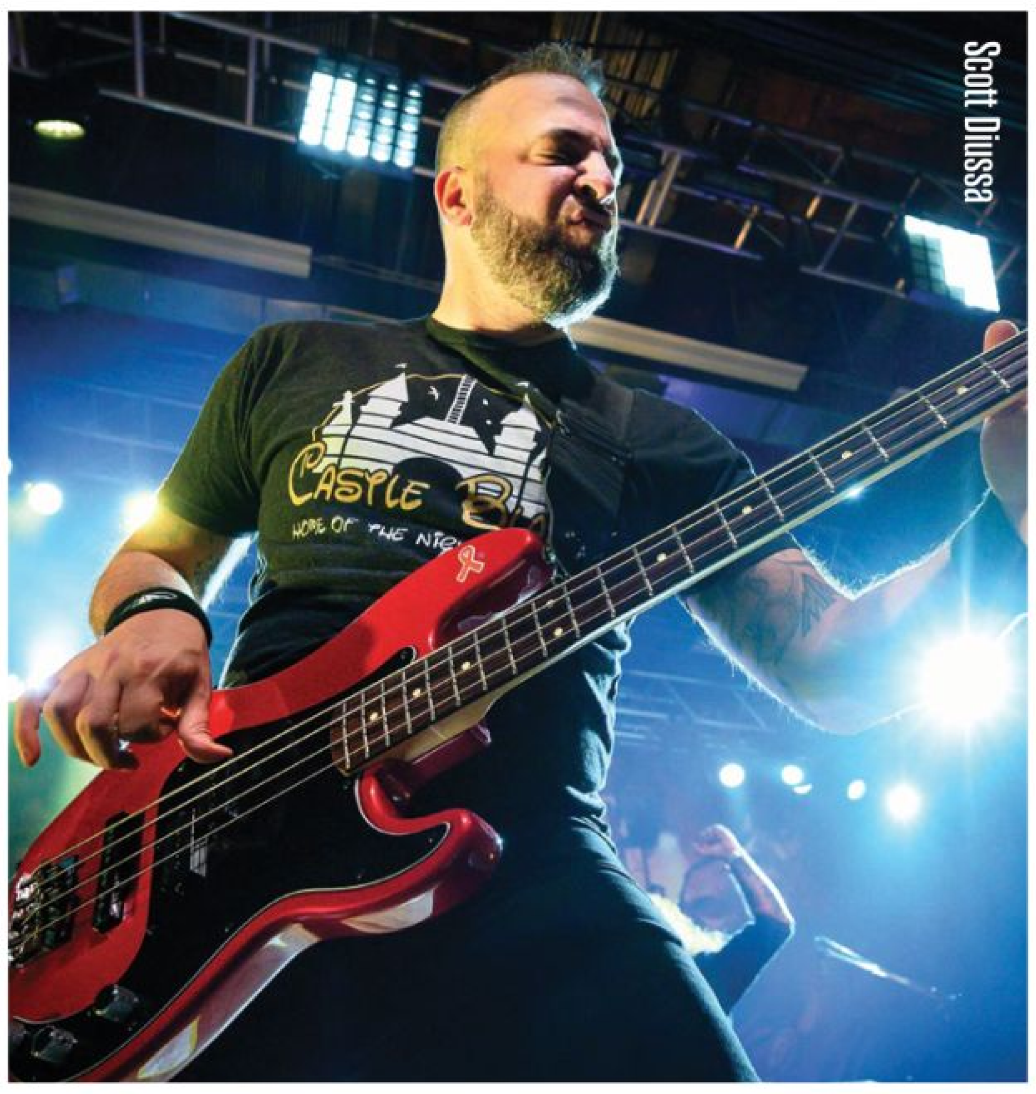
Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
To me, the greatest bass player depends on the genre. It could be anyone from Jaco to Lemmy. They all rock in their own way, and I can appreciate good quality bass playing in all styles. My bass heroes are those that play bass and sing like a mofo. Glenn Hughes: his bass-lines kick balls and have class at the same time. They're so appropriate for what he is singing. Another is Geddy Lee, whose example has given me ideas.

What are your current projects?
I love my band PowerTribe. We're a power trio, so band meetings are short and sweet, ha ha! We released one album called *Prepare For Battle*, and we are currently in the studio finishing our follow-up recording.

www.facebook.com/powertribe

MARK MENGHI

BPMD


Scott Diussa

What was your way into bass?
Cliff Burton. Hearing his song 'Orion' and the bass as a prominent instrument made me wanna pursue playing bass. Also, back in those days I was also equally into the new wave of 90s music – Pearl Jam, Alice In Chains and so on – so the musicianship of Cliff and the flannels of grunge are what got me in to bass.

What bass gear do you currently use?
My red Fender P-Bass Special doesn't leave my side. My mom, who recently passed, bought me that bass on lay-away and surprised me with it for Christmas. I have the photos of me opening it up and playing it for the first time. However, I've made many modifications to old Red over the years: the first thing I did was take off the gold pickguard and replace it with a black one. I also replaced the tuners for Schallers and had a Hipshot D-Tuner attached to the E-string tuning peg, as I've always used a lot of drop tunings. I also went through at least 20 different pickup configurations, but I've settled with DiMarzio Ultra Jazz units in place of the P pickup and keeping the stock J pickup on the bridge. I've also had this bass re-fretted twice over the years. With that, Red has been with me every step of the way. I used it to record all the Metal Allegiance records, as did David Ellefson, every single live MA show, the BPMD record... It's now an extension of my body and near and dear to my heart. I used IK AXE I/O to record my bass for the BPMD *American Made* record. It's by far the best bass DI signal I've ever gotten. Our mix engineer Mark Lewis told me it's the cleanest DI signal he ever received for bass. As I do more and more records, I've learned that the signal of the DI tone is probably the most important aspect of recording bass.

What's the best advice you can give us about playing bass?
My dear friend Billy Sheehan recently told me to 'continually practise and find your own voice within the instrument'. In fact, Mr. Sheehan has even been kind enough to give me weekly guidance. He's like my Yoda.

Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
Easy. Cliff Burton. Why, you ask? The dude revolutionised the instrument. Up until that point, thrash metal didn't exist. Cliff helped create the genre and showed that you can play with crazy speed, proficiency and technical prowess, all while keeping a groove. He was the first, at least in my book.

What are your current projects?
Metal Allegiance, where I am the primary songwriter, lyricist and producer; and my newly formed project, BPMD, which is Bobby Blitz, Mike Portnoy and Phil Demmel. I'm the M in the band name. Our debut album, *American Made*, is out on Napalm Records.

www.markmenghi.com

MADELIEF VAN VLIJMEN

MADLIFE

What was your way into bass?
I started as a piano player. When I heard 'Rejazz' by Regina Spektor, I wanted to play the double bass. I told my mother, and she said, 'Yeah, let's buy one,' which we did. When I saw Esperanza Spalding I knew it was the way to go. So instead of starting on bass guitar, like most people, I started on the upright. My first bass was a double bass, and my first bass guitar was a fretless four-string American Fender Jazz.

What bass gear do you currently use?
I have an endorsement with GR Bass for amps, with Souldier for straps, and with Warwick for basses. I have a GR One 800 head with a GR 208 cab, which sound great with double bass and a Warwick Star Bass. My effects are an MXR Bass Chorus, a Digitech Obscura Delay, an EBS Octabass and a Way Huge Pork And Pickle.

What's the best advice you can give us about playing bass?
You need to groove like a motherfucker and create unique lines, and people need to recognise your bass-playing. It's also about when to not to play – I hate it when bass players fill the space just to show off.

Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
Esperanza Spalding is my favourite bass player ever. Beside her amazing bass playing, I love her songs and how she performs them with such perfection.

What are your current projects?
Madlife is a pop band with 80s and jazz influences, and some weird song structures when I feel like it. I write all the songs and I record keys, synths, vocals, bass and upright bass myself. The Madlife album *Swans And Foxes* is out now. I also record with Jasper Schalks, tour with Dan Tuffy, sub for Beatles By Girls, and there's a new project called the Flaming Vulvas.

www.facebook.com/musicMADLIFE

TERESA KELLY

THE REVERSE, AMBER BUGS

What was your way into bass?
A friend I knew from another band needed a bass player for a new project, and after a couple of drinks I volunteered. He taught me some tunes and we played our first gig the next weekend. I bought a cheap Shein bass off eBay, mostly because I really liked the colour. I used a Fender Jazz on the new Amber Bugs EP and I'm going to add one to my collection. I'd like to get a Bass VI too.

What bass gear do you currently use?
I play a Sterling Sub, which I love, and I have a fretless which needs to get out more. Effects-wise I use a distortion pedal, but otherwise I keep it clean. On the new album with the Reverse, we recorded the bass parts live using an Ampeg SVT400 amp and a Classic 1x15 cab.

What's the best advice you've ever been given about playing bass?
Practice!

Who is, or was, the greatest bass player ever?
Carol Kaye is a legend. So many amazing lines and still going strong in her 80s. She's an amazing musician.

What are your current projects?
Our new album, *Which Way Out*, is out on Blang Records.

www.thereverse.co.uk, www.theamberbugs.com

STAR BASS

Each month we celebrate the great— and rather less great! — work of an acclaimed bass player.
This month: David 'JAH David' Goldfine

Words: Joel McIver Image: Getty

David Goldfine, better known as 'JAH David', is a Florida-based reggae bassist and producer with a huge list of credits behind him. He spends around six months of each year touring internationally with two artists – Pressure, from the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Jah9, from Jamaica – and when he's off the road he works as a studio musician and produces a whole range of artists.

Goldfine is also a member of the production team, Zion I Kings, with Laurent 'Tippy I' Alfred and Andrew 'Moon' Bain. He is endorsed by Conklin and plays a custom four-string GT4 bass, tuned BEAD. "There's no single way that I record bass," Goldfine says. "It's all about the feel, so I mostly rely on the groove and work off the drums – sometimes without any chords to work from, because the chords are implied through the bass-line."

www.facebook.com/zionikings

MUST-HAVE ALBUM

Jah9

Note To Self (2020)

"I really love the title track of this album, which features the Jamaican star Chronixx. Jah9 is my sister, and they both did a great job on this song. Iotosh [Poyser, Jamaican musician] produced the song and I recorded the bass-line at my home studio. My chain was my Conklin bass through an Ampeg SVT3 Pro head and out direct into an Apollo interface and then into Pro Tools. The mood of this line is what I love; there's a different type of feeling there. It's played very low on the B string and it has a beautiful flow to it; there's two major bass-lines and a bridge in it, with a progression that I like a lot. The song itself is just beautiful and I love the way it went down. The drums are great too, and reggae bass is so dependent on the groove from the drums, and I really felt the groove here."

WORTHY CONTENDER

Pressure

The Sound (2014)

"Check out the song 'Serious About It'. It has a very dubby bass-line, and the groove between the drums and the bass is really hypnotic. The bass doesn't really change throughout the song, it stays very groovy – and I love it. We record in a lot of different places, but I believe this one was recorded at a studio in Saint Croix in the Virgin Islands, through an API Audio console. I used a Universal Audio LA-2A compressor and an Apollo interface again. I don't generally use effects for bass; I just rely on EQ. My tone is very weighty, so I EQ out some mids and then I'll add some compression to the mix. I like to leave space between the notes; that's very important in reggae, and mostly intuitive. Some reggae lines can be very constant, while others have a space. It depends on the drum beat and the kind of song you want to do."

COOL GROOVES

Akae Beka

Mek A Menshun (2019)

"There's a song called 'Reason' on this album which is interesting. The bass-line was originally recorded here at my house in Florida. I sent to it to Wailers drummer, Aston 'Family Man' Barrett Jr, and he added the drums – because I'd recorded to a click track – and we built the song from there. I'm very faithful to my Conklin bass and have been playing it for the last 22 years. The last time I changed my strings was 18 years ago. Really and truly! It's a cheaper one, made abroad: I have a US model too, but I love the imported one. I bought my first Conklin when I was really young, so when it was time to look for endorsements, it made sense to go with them. Akae Beka passed away last year: he and I were very close and did a lot of work together. He was a prominent figure in reggae music."

WILD CARD

Lutan Fyah

Music Never Dies (2017)

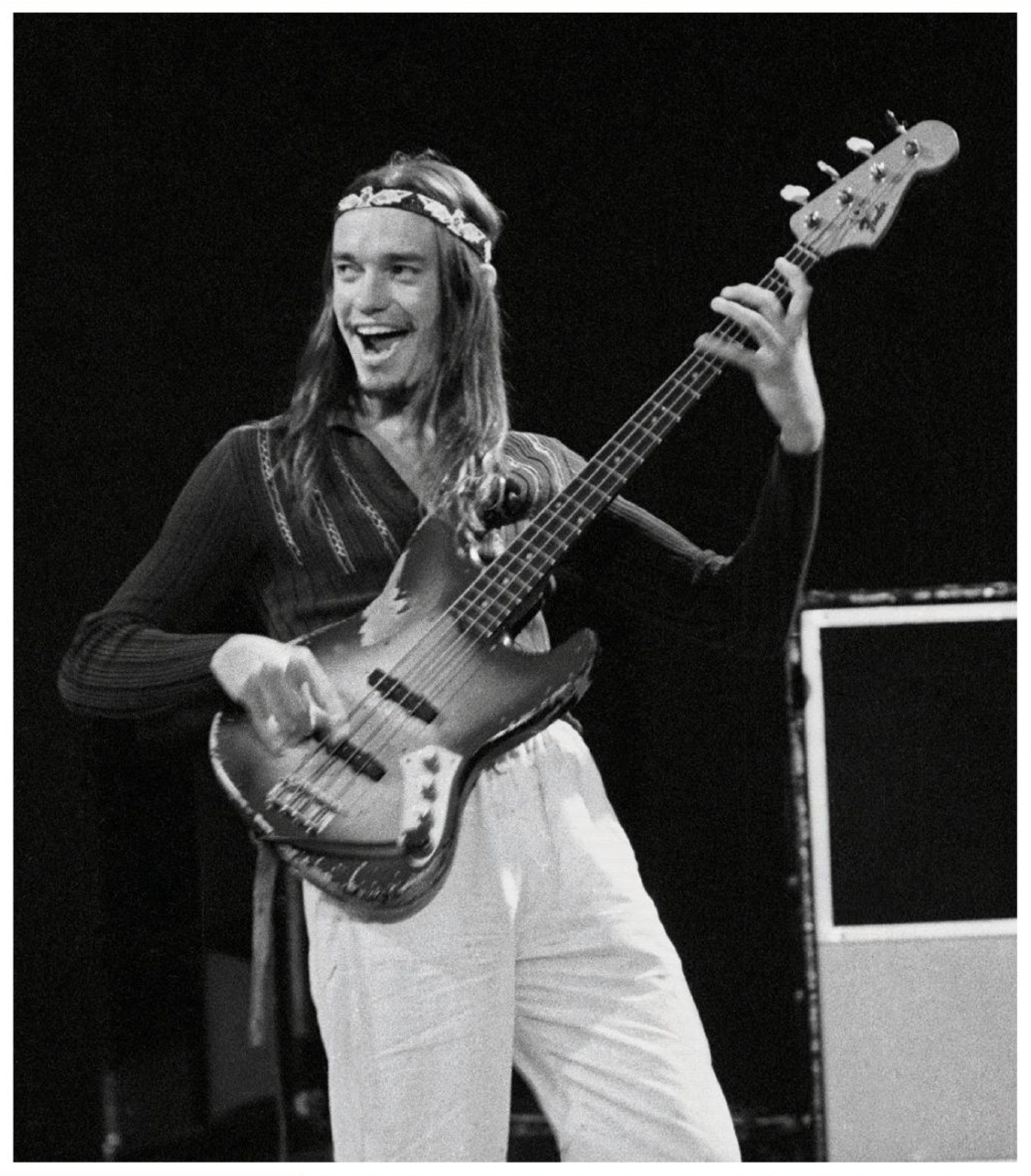
"I particularly like the song 'Too Much Ramshackle' on this album. The bass and drums were recorded in Miami at a studio called Audio Vision, owned by Herb Alpert. It's a great studio, with a really nice analogue board. In fact pretty much everything I do is analogue, whether it's the outboard gear or the console. It's the warmth and the weight of the sound that I love; its fluidity is unparalleled. It's a digital world, of course, but I like to send at least some analogue colour into Pro Tools. Lutan Fyah is a great, great artist out of Jamaica who I've been working with since 2002, and again, this song has a really hypnotic groove. I think that's typical of the sound from our collective production team, Zion I Kings. I hear this sound a lot when I'm in Jamaica. As I said before, space is at the heart of all the lines I play. You need the bass to breathe, so allow the spaces between the notes to have a presence."

AVOID AT ALL COSTS

Snoop Lion

Reincarnated (2013)

"Now, on this album I didn't actually play the bass. We wrote a rhythm track for one of the songs, 'So Long', and Snoop [Dogg, aka Lion on this album] heard it when one of my colleagues in our collective, Moon, worked on the album and played it to him. He loved it, but we had already released a song that used the same rhythm track. Snoop was deterred by this, but he loved it so much that he insisted on using it, so he hired Stewart Copeland of the Police to reproduce it. I don't wish to disrespect Stewart, but when he transposed the track it just didn't have the same feel. It was composed the same way, it just lost the groove. The pocket ended up in a different place to the original, and I felt like it lost a whole lot in the translation. The song itself was okay, and in fact it was nominated for a Grammy that year, which was really nice – but it wasn't my proudest moment."



PASSING THE TORCH

Words: Mike Brooks, Joel McIver Photos: Getty

Felix Pastorius is an extraordinary bass player, as you might expect given the legacy of his late father Jaco – and he finds himself in an equally extraordinary position for the same reason. We ask Felix about his plans for the future, his perceptions of the past and his advice for those 'expecting to see a Pastorius' when they come to his shows...

Warwick, NY-based Felix Pastorius was born, along with his twin brother Julius, in 1982, five years before the premature death of his father Jaco Pastorius, arguably the most influential electric bassist of all time alongside James Jamerson and Paul McCartney. A superb bassist himself with a long list of recording and performance credits behind him, including a stint in the Yellowjackets from 2012 to 2015, Felix plays in a handful of elite bands and delivers clinics and bass lessons. He's also the author of several books, including *Hot Dog Dinners For 4 String Electric Bass*, *Just A.S.I.P. Of Coffee & The Chromatic Scale* and *Scales From Rhythm And Outer Space... Aka Tetra Cocktails*.

Our questions for Felix are arguably aimed at his late father just as much as they aimed at him. Although Jaco didn't live to see his son follow in his musical footsteps, the inevitable associations of that unique surname connect their creative mindset to a profound degree. Consider the case of the late John Lennon and his sons Julian and Sean; it's not too much of a stretch to consider the two father-son relationships as parallel.

To Felix's immense credit, he responds to our questions with tolerance and good humour – exactly, we hope, as his dad might well have done.

"Even if Jaco wasn't my father, I'd still be comparing myself to other bassists"

You play live with a number of interesting projects, Felix.
Yes, I'm very fortunate that way. I have a touring band called Hipster Assassins, and I've done a lot of tours over the last 11 years with the drummer Cindy Blackman-Santana, who is such a great person to play and work with. We've just recorded a live album with her band. I also play with Jazz Is Phish, which has a lot of musicians in it from bands such as Ghost Note and Snarky Puppy, and I'm a part of a group called Social Experiment. I really want to mention Venture, which is me, Mike Clark on drums, Mark Sherman on vibraphone and Chase Baird on saxophone: we've recorded an album and we'll be touring when that becomes possible again. There's also a collaboration with Keith Carlock, Nir Felder and Jeff Coffin which I'm really enjoying.

What's your current gear setup?
I've been with Aguilar for amplification, pedals and pickups for over 13 years, and I also want to put one of their preamps into one of my basses. I don't have a very large collection of basses; they're more of a 'story line' of who I am and where I've been. I don't collect basses, but I'm very interested in the idea of having a relationship with an instrument, whether it be a boutique, multi-thousand dollar instrument or a little scrapper that you find. My main instrument is a Fodera, who have been close friends of mine and my family for a long time. It's wonderful to have those guys in my back yard for any needs that I might have.

Sounds like a tried-and-tested setup.
It is, yeah. When I practise, I use a Warwick Alien six-string, and I also use LK Straps, D'Addario strings and Dunlop gear. I'm also using a bass by Soame, an Argentinean company which makes me a five-string. It's for gigs where a simpler visual aesthetic is required for the bass. I have it strung with a regular B string.

> "MY BROTHER AND I WERE ENCOURAGED TO BE ARTISTIC ALL THE TIME"

How old were you when you got your first Fodera?
My mom brought me to the shop for the first time when I was 14 or 15, along with my brother Julius. Vinny Fodera recalls it like it was yesterday. I just remember how sweet everybody was, and how excited they were to have us in the shop. I remember Vinny not letting us leave the shop until he ordered us a cab – he wouldn't let us take the train. So I've known them for a long time, and I've played a few Foderas over the years, but my main bass for most of my clinics and gigs over the years has been a Fodera Emperor 2 six-string – 33" scale, rosewood fingerboard, box elder burl top. I put in Aguilar DCB ceramic bar pickups – I love those.

What was your first bass?
I started with a Fender Jazz four-string,

ALL THAT JAZZ

The amazing story of Jaco's 1962 Jazz — the so-called 'Bass Of Doom' — and how it came back to the Pastorius family after two decades of absence

You may have seen the 2014 documentary *Jaco*, produced by Metallica bassist Robert Trujillo, which enjoyed its European premiere at the London Bass Guitar Show. It's an astonishing tale, following Jaco from his early life through to stardom with Weather Report and as a solo artist, before his struggle with bipolar disorder and his tragically early death in 1987 at the hands of a nightclub bouncer.

Along the way, the most commonly-seen bass guitar is the famous 1962 Fender Jazz, which Jaco defretted and used to devastating effect on many seminal recordings. Stolen from him in 1982, the bass vanished from the public eye until 2006 or thereabouts, when it resurfaced in a New York music store. Asked for a huge sum to repurchase it, the Pastorius family were aided greatly by Trujillo, who purchased it on their behalf. Although he's the technical owner of the bass, his stated intention was for the Bass Of Doom to reside with Jaco's family, where it remains to this day.

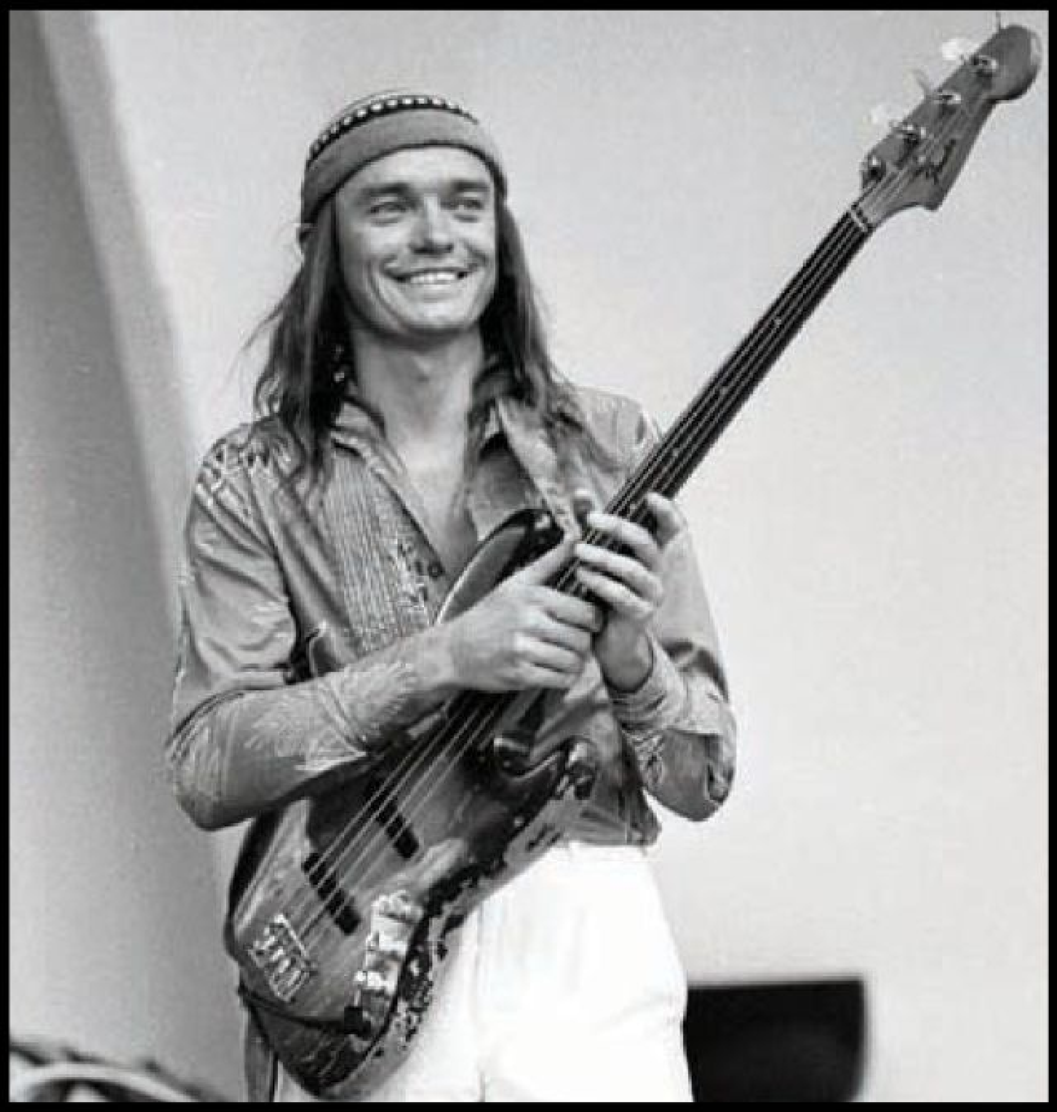
Tell us the story of how your family reconnected with the Bass Of Doom, Felix.
First of all, when I finally got to see the bass, it was not under normal circumstances. This bass was like a lost relative, in some senses. It was something I had been around all my life in terms of listening to and hearing stories about it, but I had never met this 'thing', you know? So I didn't know if there would be a proper scenario, or how it would work out. But the way it happened, it was during the process of litigation. My brother and I were in New York – this was before I moved up there – and we were given the opportunity to see the bass in person. The person that had it

wanted verification from the family, and the luthier who refurbished the bass. They wanted us to put the stamp of approval on it so they could get a bit more bang out of it.

This must have been incredibly emotional for you.
It was a very tumultuous experience. Here we were, with the opportunity to finally see this instrument, with me as a bassist, and the rest of my family all musicians. We were able to touch it, plug it in and experience this instrument for the first time in 30-plus years. At the same time, it wasn't ours – at this point it was in someone else's possession.

Were you aware of its history between it being stolen from Jaco and turning up at a store in New York?
That whole process, from my father to these guys who had it... Who knows? There's no real log of what happened. There are stories that have been told, and there are people who were around, but there's no definitive receipt of sale. So my brother and I show up to see the bass, and the owner is there. The guy who brought the bass in the first time didn't believe it was 'The Bass' when he saw it, so they sent him away – or that's what they tell us. Then the guy comes back, and then they get a little more curious about it, because now he's mentioning a few things that make a little more sense – naming some people who are locals, who have been in New York for a while. They ended up purchasing the bass. The guy who owns the store, his brother is a bassist, and he apparently started bodyguarding it. It was in his apartment and he wouldn't let it go anywhere. So we walk into this music store, and the owner is there and he's making sure that we didn't turn up with a lawyer – or some kind of backup, ha ha!

What happened next?
He makes a phone call and Chris Jisi [*Bass Player* magazine writer] turns up, he makes another call and the store owner's brother turns up with a gigbag. I know it's in the bag, and it's 100 feet away from me, and then it's 50 feet, then 10, then five... And then it's right next to me. The guy pulls the bass out, looks around and tells me I have five minutes, which was a completely weird situation – like finding a lost relative, but only having five minutes with them. I played it and I was shaking. I didn't know what to play on it, I was so dumbfounded. The five minutes passed and that was it – the owner's brother took the bass away again, and we continued to talk to the owner.



So when did it come back to the family?
I didn't see it again for a few months, because we were going through litigation – and then Robert Trujillo came in and saved the day. We went to the office of the lawyers who were representing the music store, and they had the bass there. We signed a few things, I took the bass and we went to our own lawyer's office and had a little party. We brought in an amp, I plugged it in and played a bunch of stuff.

"The way it still sang... It had stories, like an old sailor"

How did it feel?
It felt amazing. I was awe-struck by the energy that surrounded this instrument, and the way it still sang – notes were pouring out of it. Any early-60s Jazz already has its own character, and even though this one had been refurbished, it still had stories, like an old sailor. It was a great party, and it felt awesome. From then it's gone back and forth between him and me. Robert played it at a Metallica show in Yankee Stadium in September 2011, and we went to see it, which was amazing. I used it to record a Yellowjackets album [*A Rise In The Road*, 2013].

That's great to hear.
From day one, Robert has always said 'This is your bass as much as it is mine'. He believes in it the same way I believe in it. The only reason this bass has any value, aside from it being a Fender Jazz, is because of one person. If it wasn't still being shared by that person's family, it would be sacrilegious. It was a really unusual experience, even more so from the perspective of being a bassist. I think of everything we went through as a family, working towards making sure our father's estate is protected, which was not an easy thing, because there was a lot of turmoil in the family. To go through all that stuff and find 'The Bass' was the icing on the cake.

Bass gurus at Bass Player Live (from left): Robert Trujillo of Metallica, the producer of the Jaco documentary; the great Lee Sklar; Felix's brother John Pastorius

that I still have parts of today. My second go-to bass in my collection has the body of that Jazz, because it's one of the first four bodies of my father's signature basses. When Fender started mass-producing it in 1999, they gave one to each of my dad's four children. I guess the most important bass at my house at the moment is my father's fretless, though.

Did you study music?
I never went to music school and never had a proper teacher – so I've always tried to approach my teaching as the way that I taught myself and I continue to teach myself. That can be detrimental to my profession as a teacher, because I tend to say way too much information straight off the bat, but that's because I really do enjoy sharing information. I don't think about music all the time: I like sports, and I have responsibilities, but I do it because I enjoy learning music and practising as well as it being my profession. Luckily, I've been able to survive in New York as a musician. I've done other gigs along the way but I've been very fortunate to play music for most of my life.

How did you get into playing bass? Was it inevitable, given your heritage?
No, I think bass is a by-product of the encouragement that my mother gave my brother and me to play music. I don't think she specifically wanted us to play bass. We took up violin first, which didn't last very long, and then we played piano. After that, my brother switched to guitar and then to drums, while I went to bass. As 11-year-olds, jamming on guitar and piano wasn't half as much fun as jamming on bass and drums, especially with our lack of theory and music knowledge.

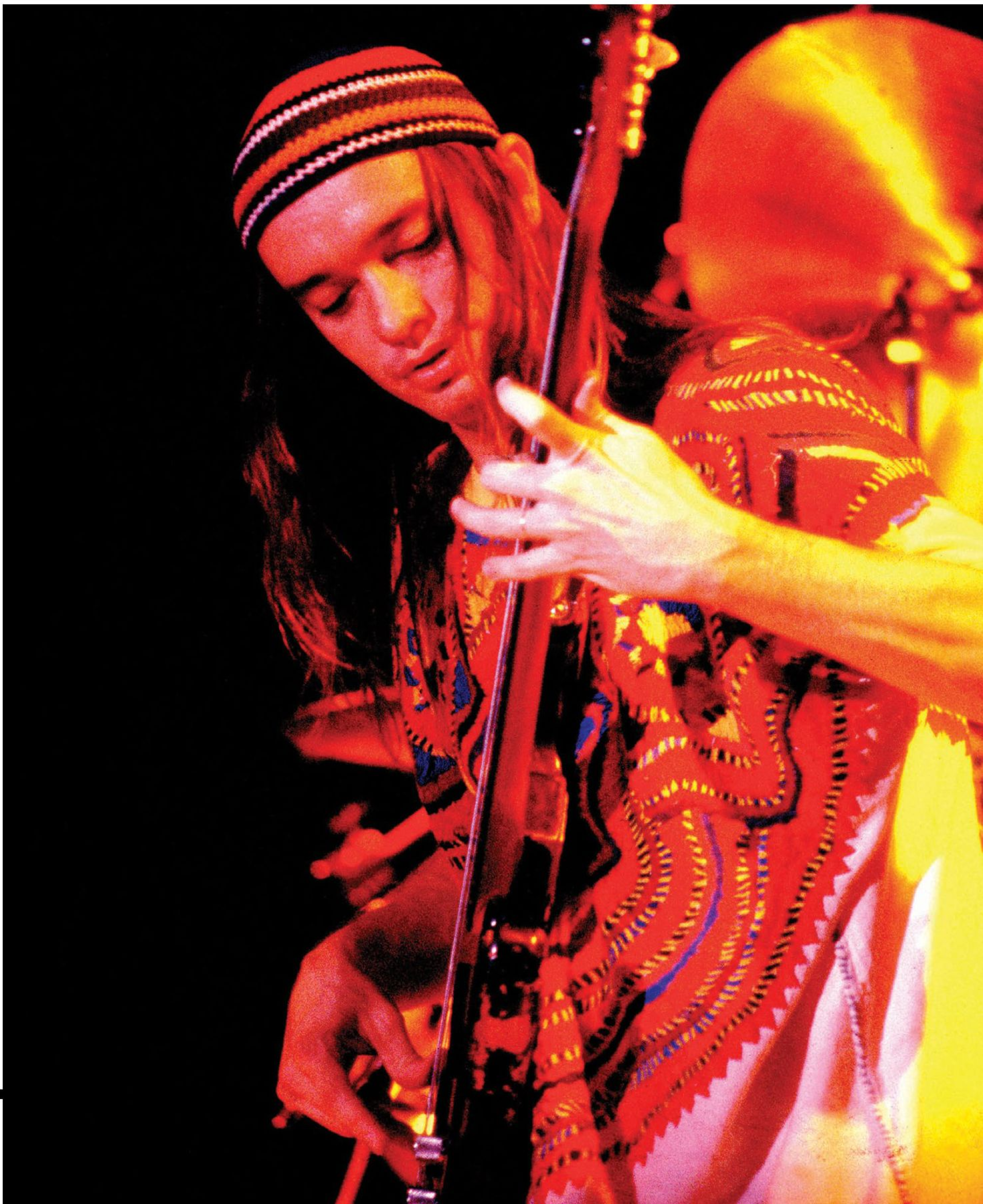
What was it about bass that spoke to you?
It was just an instrument that I gravitated towards. I knew that I had the bug when I started teaching myself music theory on the bass, and I loved the way the bass looked and sounded. I'm very visual. My brother and I were encouraged to be artistic all the time, and most of my stuff was fairly angular, whereas my brother's art was free-flowing. We're twins, but polar opposites – similar in many ways, but opposites too. I just remember having a lot more fun playing bass, although I loved figuring music out on piano.

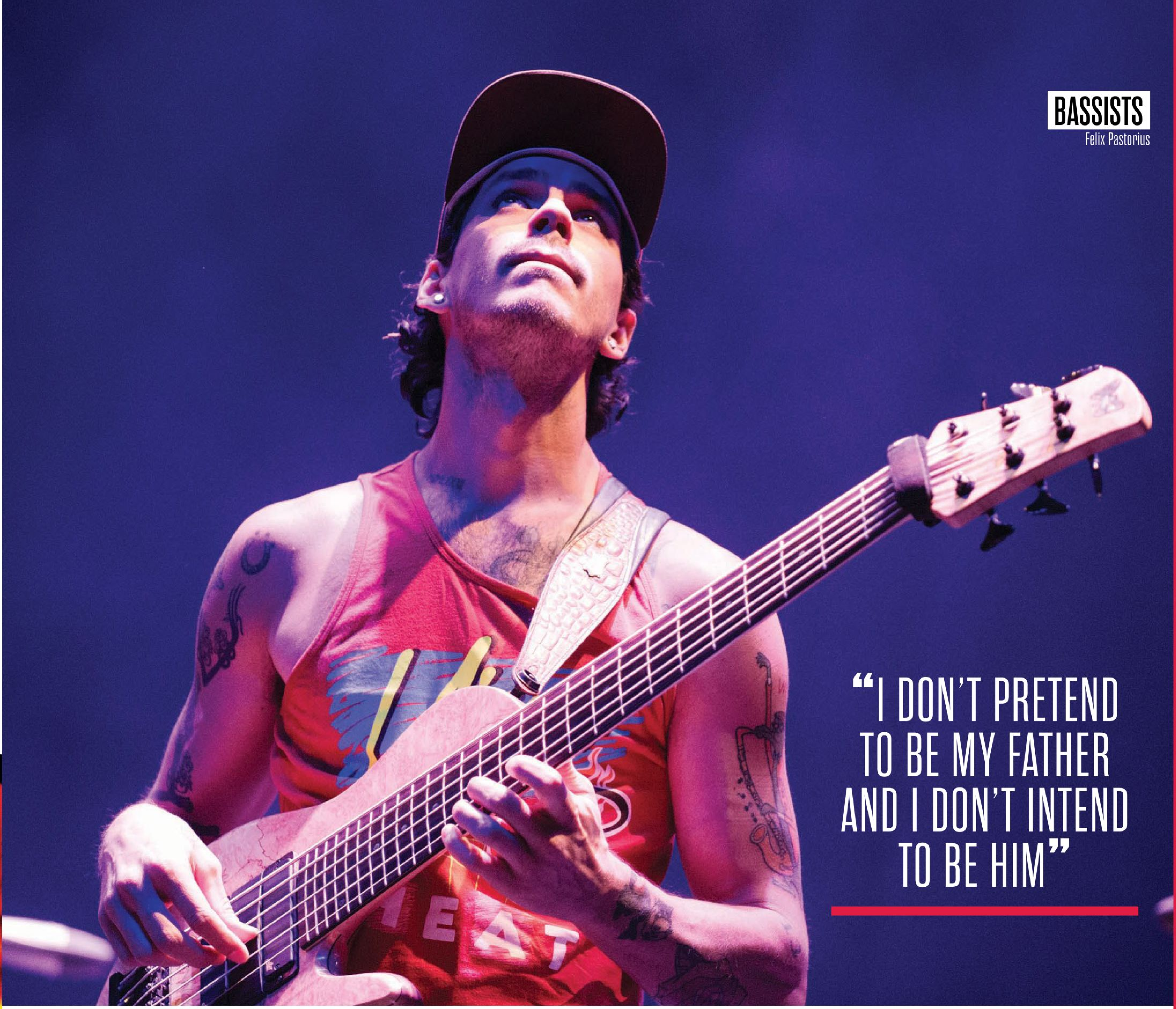
What kind of music did you play in the early days?
There's a cassette tape of my grandfather Jack, who was Jaco's father, on drums, my older brother John on piano, and me on bass. That's one of my very earliest memories of playing bass. I don't think I'd ever had as much fun in my life before that.

Who were your inspirations when you were growing up?
We obviously listened to our father a lot, but also Stevie Wonder and Earth, Wind & Fire, because R&B and soul were huge for us, growing up in our house. I'm an early-80s kid, though, so I was introduced to post-punk, which then became alternative rock and then grunge. Primus was huge for me: the first two albums I bought with my own money, when I was 11 years old, were *Sailing The Seas Of Cheese* and *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* by the Red Hot Chili Peppers. I listened to them over and over and over again. They were huge for me. I was constantly blown away by what both of those guys were doing.

It was a great time to be learning bass.
Definitely. The early 90s was also the progression of the 'bass personality'. You had a whole slew of kids who were now creating new sounds and new ideas – the Michael Manrings and Victor Wootens of this world. I started getting introduced to these guys through other musicians who said I should check them out. That was a rabbit hole that I definitely fell into, getting *Bass Player* magazines for the first time, and checking out what was going on out there.

Do you find there is a weight of expectation from people when they meet you, because of who your father was?
If there's ever pressure on me to be a musician, I don't think anyone could put more on me than I do myself. It's not even based on who my father was. Even if he wasn't my father, I'd still be comparing myself to other bassists. I think it's more difficult for the person who is expecting something than it is for me; my role as a musician is to fulfil my obligations as a bassist in the band I'm in. The last thing





“I DON’T PRETEND TO BE MY FATHER AND I DON’T INTEND TO BE HIM”

I want to do is to fuck up a tune: I’m way more concerned with who I’m playing with in the band. That’s what I love about live performance and live music, being in that moment and having that opportunity to step up and do what is necessary.

Your father’s legacy is huge – perhaps the biggest legacy of any bass player.
I get that. My father wasn’t around for a very long time, so a lot of people didn’t get the opportunity to see him live. Maybe people think it’s their chance to see a ‘Pastorius’ when they come to see me, but maybe they’re robbing themselves of the opportunity to experience new things. I’m not going to be my father. I don’t pretend to be my father, and I don’t intend to be him. There are other bassists that would like to be in my position – not necessarily to play like him, although there are a lot that try to – but because they want to carry on what he was doing. I don’t know if they grasp the importance of being an individual.

Above: A six-stringed bass master in his element. Insert: Three of Felix’s works as a published author

How do you pursue that goal?
I just do my best to have a good time and put on a great show and play great music. To me, my father could have been an astronaut or a basketball player, and he would have had the same impact – because he was a unique individual and carried himself in a unique way. He ‘felt’ in ways that were different to how people normally do – so if you’re coming to my show, I hope you don’t expect to see my dad, because he’s not here any more. But I don’t hold that against anybody. He was ‘The One’. You love him, and I love him.

www.facebook.com/FelixPastoriusMusic, @PastorFL3X

Chris Fleming, Director of Custom Operations at Fender's Custom Shop

"IF YOU WANT TO BE A WORKING MUSICIAN – PLAY BASS!"

You read it here first... We visited Fender's Custom Shop in Corona, California for a peek behind the scenes and some pearls of wisdom

Words: Joel McIver Photos: Olly Curtis

In the pandemic-stricken era in which we find ourselves, the word 'Corona' is often followed by the word 'virus', sadly. However, cast your mind back a few months and you'll recall that in bass world, 'Corona' has a far more cheerful application in the name of the California city where Fender has its Custom Shop. That, friends, is where we found ourselves a while back, for a tour of the facility courtesy of Chris Fleming, Director of Custom Operations.

On arrival, our friendly Fender rep informs us of a few ground rules – wear safety goggles, stay inside the yellow lines, don't disturb the Master Builders – all of which make eminent sense given that the factory is full of powerful machinery and that the staff are working on bass guitars that cost several thousand dollars each. Chris then takes over and shows us around the factory, as the following pictures reveal, before we sit down in his office for a chat about life at the Big F.

Chris, approximately how much of the Custom Shop's output is bass?

I don't know exactly, but I'd say 20 to 25 percent is bass. There just aren't as many bass players. Look at my tattoos: I have one of a Telecaster which says 'Live To Play' and this one is of a Fifties P-Bass which says 'Play To Live'.

> "BASS PLAYERS ARE A LOT LESS PERSNICKETY!"

That's wisdom, right there.

It is, because if you really want to be a working musician, you should play bass. And be good at it, of course...

Low-hanging fruit: take a look upwards at the Custom Shop and you'll be greeted with quite a sight

Is your name on one of these custom-built basses? If so, we envy you

What are the specific challenges with making basses that you don't get with guitars?
The biggest challenge with bass, especially with Fender basses, is the design of the neck. With the early Fender basses, they didn't think through how small and flexible the neck is, especially with the Jazz bass. With the early ones especially, you have to be really careful, so that's why all of our basses have quarter-sawn necks, because it really helps to stabilise them. But other than that, they're not a whole lot different as far as the process goes. The necks are definitely our biggest trouble.

Are bass players' requirements changing as the years pass?
No, I wouldn't say so. Bass players are a lot more practical and less conservative than guitar players. They're open to new things – new sounds, new shapes, new materials and so on. I'd much rather make a bass for somebody than a guitar for somebody. Bass players are a lot less persnickety. I don't think bass is as much of a fashion statement as guitars are.

> **"AMERICAN-MADE BASSES REMAIN THE GOLD STANDARD"**

How much of your output is five-string?
Very little. We don't make many five-strings in the Custom Shop at all, although we have done in the past. The Custom Shop is largely vintage-based, or vintage-modified stuff.

An American-made bass remains the gold standard, just as it always has been, but production quality of overseas-made basses has increased hugely over the decades. Is it as important as it once was to have an American-made bass?
That's a good question. The difference with the Custom Shop is that we spend more time, and we're more choosy about the materials we use – and there's the level of craftsmanship that we have. When we make a bass, you're gonna have a much better chance of getting a really, really good one. But, you know, every instrument has its own thing going on, and I'd agree that these days instruments made in other countries are much better than they used to be. I recently bought an Ibanez guitar for $500, and it's a really great little jazz guitar. Now, I can make a nice jazz guitar here if I want to, but I wouldn't be able to do it for $500.

Our reviewer of your recent Squier 60s Jazz swears it's as good as the real thing.
Yes, I wouldn't be surprised. Part of that is due to us [the Custom Shop], because we have folks who go to all the factories and help them improve what they do for us. I did that for about five years myself. We started asking for more exact specifications, and they're doing that for us, so the stuff that's coming from there now is really good.

Fender remains the world's best-known electric guitars and bass brand. Is that primarily because you guys were first?
I think that's definitely a part of it, but I also think that the designs of the instruments were really useful for musicians, and they looked extremely cool too. It all happened in the right time and at the right place. Music was blossoming – country and western, surf music and then rock. It was also a lifestyle, so it's all connected. People saw Fenders being played on TV.

Which sells more, the Jazz or the Precision?
The most popular bass we make is probably the Jazz, overall, but from my point of view, Fender's most important invention was the P-Bass. It changed music.

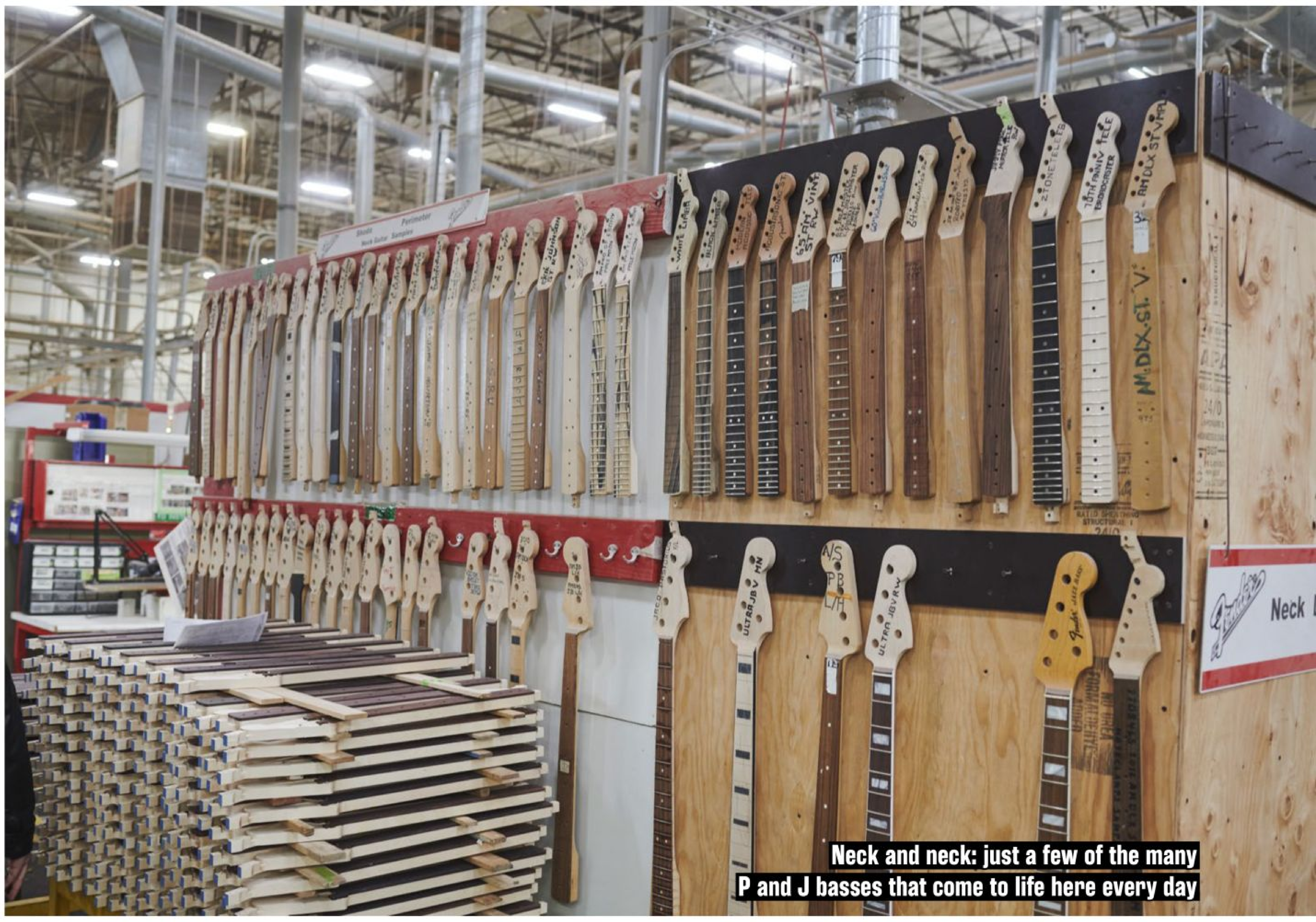
How far ahead do your orders go?
We've found that the sweet spot is about

Don't disturb this guy; he's creating bass history

six to seven months for teambuilt guitars, and for a couple of the masterbuilders, they have about three, three and a half years of orders. A masterbuilt guitar takes nine to 18 months, although it depends. Most of the folks that buy custom-built guitars from us are dealers. We're doing really well right now. There's still something aspirational about a Fender guitar.

If you could choose any single Fender Custom Shop bass to play yourself, which model would it be?
I'd actually choose a P-Bass, but with a Jazz neck. I made a bass to that specification for myself and it's really great. I could have built a standard Precision, because I really like the shape and the feel and the pickup of the P-Bass, and the punchiness of the tones that it has, but the thinner neck of the Jazz is really comfy.

www.fendercustomshop.com/basses


Neck and neck: just a few of the many P and J basses that come to life here every day

Pass Notes

Welcome to Pass Notes, our new advice page where we ask a renowned bass player for tips about building a career. This month: Michael McKeegan, Therapy?

The Northern Irish trio Therapy?, now a going concern for 30 years, are unique in British rock music. They don't sound like any other band, switching between metal, angry punk rock and other generally noisy approaches with equal facility. Bassist Michael McKeegan, a columnist for this magazine for the last eight years, occupies an enviable spot between Andy Cairns (vocals, guitar) and Neil Cooper (drums), delivering a mighty rumble that veers between supportive and creative.

"I play Warwick Streamer LX basses," McKeegan tells us. "I have two identical four-strings, although there's a Hipshot detuner on one of them. My amps are Warwick LWA1000 heads with everything set at noon, so they're basically a power amp, but with so much headroom that it's insane. If we go to a festival and they give me two 8x10 cabs, it can drive them both. You could power the entire village we live in with one of them! I'm using Eden cabs: I have a really nice 6x10, which is very punchy and aggressive."

For tone-sculpting, McKeegan has a novel solution. "The pedalboard has

McKeegan's mantra: "We didn't come all this way to play like idiots!"

a Sansamp VT pedal as the main clean DI, and then I've got a Geddy Lee YYZ Sansamp too," he explains. "The front of house gets the clean DI, but they both go through the amp, so it's a two-Sansamp setup. I also have a Boss flanger and I've been experimenting with a Dr Freakenstein expression pedal."

You'll soon hear all this state-of-the-art gear in action on *The Greatest Hits (The Abbey Road Session)*, recorded to celebrate Therapy?'s 30th anniversary. Meanwhile, what advice does McKeegan have for us about the noble art of the rock career?

Respect your past

"We've always done album-themed shows and tours, and acoustic stuff as well, which is really good for you mentally and playing-wise. It's a tightrope, though; you don't want to be too retro. We have a great body of songs and it's great to honour that, so we're straddling that line with the new album. Thirty years has crept up very quickly, especially in the last 10 years, which have basically been a blur. We made a big deal out of our 10th anniversary, and released a collection and did some shows, and then for the 20th anniversary we did a few shows to celebrate our *Troublegum* album from 1994. We knew we wanted to make the 30th anniversary fun and make it a celebration, so we thought about doing a live album, but we did one of those a few years ago – so there would have been a lot of repeated tracks. In the end we decided to re-record some songs, but in a session kind of way – just to go in, do them quickly and not overthink it, to keep the energy up. We did it all in a day at Abbey Road. One of the engineers said, 'This is going pretty quickly', and I told him we'd been in pre-production for 30 years..."

Stay healthy... And age gracefully

"There's a Peter Pan mentality in rock'n'roll which can be quite destructive. You see musicians trying to squeeze into clothes that they really shouldn't be squeezing into. More seriously, people like their rock stars to be fucked up, but I like being healthy, personally. We've lost too many creative people at too young an age, including heroes of mine, in the last couple of years. We've never really talked about this, actually, but within our band I think there's a sense of responsibility, boring as that might sound. We want to be in good shape for good shows, because people pay money to see you, so let's not do them half-cocked. We're really lucky to be able to do them, and the fact that everybody in the band is in good health is something to be celebrated. That's what this year is about."

Why worry about boundaries?

Say you're working on album number 16 and, like us, you're not a formula band like AC/DC or Motörhead or the Ramones, with rigid rules – you can always push things in a variety of ways, although obviously we're always going to sound like us. We can be more varied than a lot of bands, which is great because I would never want to write a 'Therapy?-style' song or album. Each song has to have its own character, which keeps it fresh for us. On the other hand, people ask, 'Which Therapy? are we going to get today?', which could be a disadvantage, ha ha! We thrive off that."

Deliver the best show you can

"The only pressure that I feel nowadays comes when I realise that there might be someone in the audience who has seen us play 40 times before – because I want this time to be as good, or better, than those previous 40 times. It's brilliant that we have some security in that people will probably come out to a show if we book one, but we never, ever take that for granted. The show has to be the best it can be, every single night, so we're all very conscious of what we're doing. It's crucial to enjoy it, too. I get as much out of every show as the audience does. I don't do sport, I don't go out on Friday nights and get into fights – this is my release. It's been a very cathartic thing for me. No matter how tired or sick you are, or what nonsense has gone on during the day, once you go on stage you know this is what it's all about. We have a joke in the band: 'We didn't come all this way to play like idiots'. Even if you're exhausted because you've travelled all night, and pissed off because your gear hasn't shown up, why annoy the audience? The people in the audience might have just done a 12-hour shift in a factory, so give them what they deserve."

Therapy?'s album *The Greatest Hits (The Abbey Road Session)* is out now on Marshall Records.
Info: www.therapyquestionmark.co.uk.

These Boots...

...were made for walking bass-lines, says Slyboots bassist Margaret LaBombard

I play bass in Slyboots, a melodic new wave band. The songwriter and guitarist, KG Noble, and I have been playing together for years, both in bands and backing different types of singers around New York City. Three years ago, she and I decided it was time to start our own band, and that became Slyboots.

In 2017, our third gig took place at Liverpool's Cavern Club for the International Pop Overthrow Festival. That was quite an accomplishment, because our singer had never been in a band before. We worked really hard to get a set together and develop a vibe. Our original drummer couldn't go to Liverpool, and my husband, Ted Marcus – who used to play in the Meat Puppets – was talked into being our drummer for the festival. After that, he kept on showing up to rehearsals, and organically became a member in the band.

I grew up playing trombone in elementary school through high school, and I continued to play in concert bands when I first moved to New York. I was always connected to the bass clef. I remember taking guitar lessons as a teenager and I wanted to learn 'Brown Eyed Girl', so my teacher taught me the chords, and how to strum, and gave me the homework. I was so confused. The following week I said, 'Doesn't the guitar part go like this?', and I sang what I heard. My teacher was like, 'Mags, that's the bass line. You need to play the acoustic guitar part.' I didn't even hear the acoustic guitar – my ear naturally turned to the bass.

Later in my mid-twenties, I moved to New York with my brother, who is a guitar player. He and I went into Guitar Center and I bought my first bass and a Hal Leonard book. Shortly thereafter, my brother made friends with a guy at an art opening who happened to be a singer songwriter and we formed our first band. I haven't stopped playing bass since.

> "WE CAN TAKE A LITTLE SOLACE IN THIS CRAZY WORLD KNOWING THAT WE BASS PLAYERS ARE ALL CONNECTED THROUGH THE LOW FREQUENCY"

My first bass was a sparkly blue OLP, which mirrored a Music Man. It was fine. I didn't know what I was doing when I bought it, I just liked the colour. About a year later I saw an ad on Craigslist for a Geddy Lee Jazz for $400. I swapped out the pickups and Jimmy Coppolo of Alleva Coppolo rolled me a set. I love that bass. It has a piece of my soul in it.

I also just picked up a Mustang from the Squier Custom Vibe line. That bass is awesome. It's incredible how great it is. The bass is so well made and the price is more than right – it feels really good. I've started to incorporate the Mustang into my everyday playing. I also have a Carvin JB5 and it's so nice. KG and I used to back a young teenage singer and at the time her music called for a five-string bass. I needed that low B string. I'm glad that it's in my collection, but it's not my go-to-bass. I mostly play a four-string. I just love that uninhibited low E ring. For effects, I use a Red Witch Zeus Bass Fuzz, an MXR Bass Chorus Deluxe and an MXR Bass Envelope, and my choice of amps includes Euphonic Audio, Markbass and Hartke.

The bass community in New York City is exceptionally supportive. The network is amazing and so much of that is because of bass player Mike Visceglia. He's been with Suzanne Vega from the start of her career. Mike is a true connector. Knowing that there is a community who generously offers any advice on playing, and has provided me with amps, strings and basses, is extraordinary.

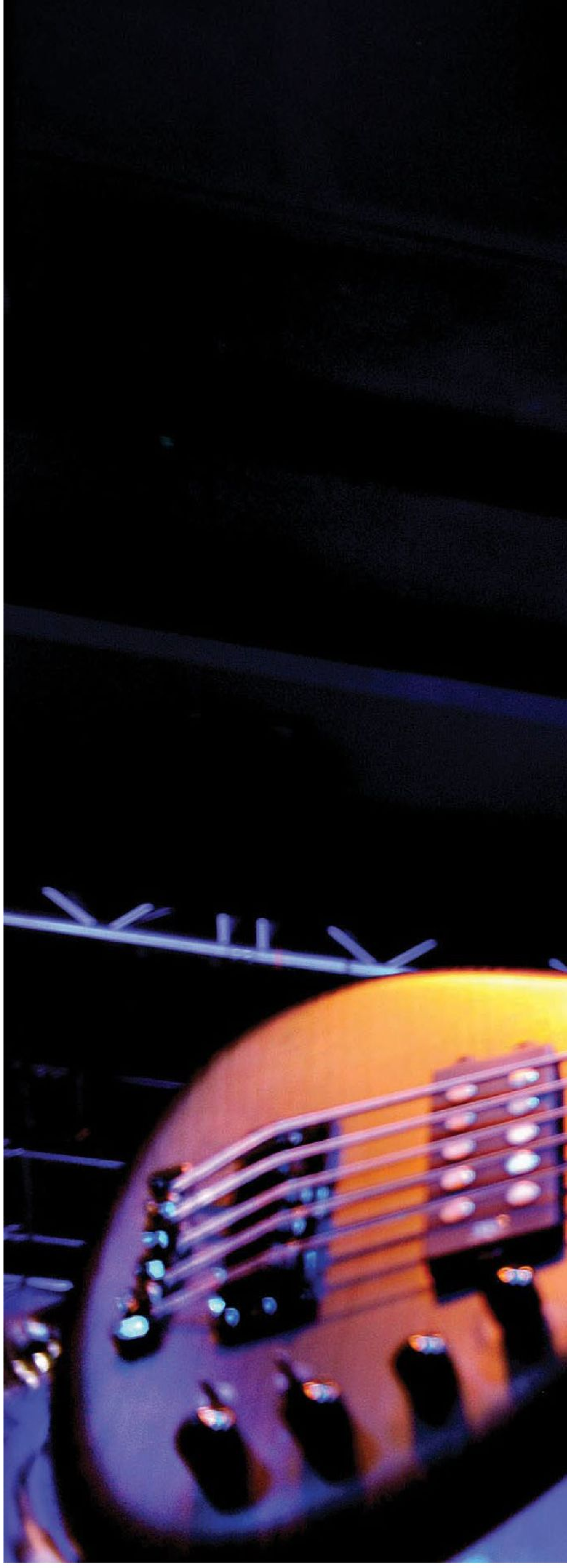
The secret is to play with intention. One has to have something to say and to communicate and connect with the listener. It's all about giving and making the listener feel good. If a song makes you feel something, I believe that you can thank the bass player. Tone is part of what makes you special as a player. There's only one Margaret LaBombard and I love the process of developing my tone and doing my own thing. That said, if the tone supports the song, then I've done part of my job.

Bass players are the best people. They are supportive and calm and cool and confident. We're a community. We can take a little solace in this crazy world knowing that we bass players are all connected through the low frequency.

http://slybootsnyc.com, http://margaretlabombard.com

TRIVIUM PURSUIT

Modern metal is alive and well in the hands of Florida headbangers Trivium, reports their bassist Paolo Gregoletto. "Years of experimenting have made me realise what I want and what I need to get there," he muses



"We're taking things as they come. Everything is happening until it's not," states Trivium bassist Paolo Gregoletto, asked about this year's touring plans. With a new album, *What The Dead Men Say*, out as you read this, Trivium – Gregoletto plus Matt Heafy (vocals, guitar), Corey Beaulieu (guitar) and Alex Bent (drums) – should have had a major year for touring. For them as for so many other bands, 2020 looks likely to be the year that never happened, but he's counting his blessings, as we all should.

"I have no excuse now not to pick up my bass and start working on new scales," he chuckles. "We've been through so much as a band since I joined back in 2004, and we'll get through this. Bass-wise, I've played with so many different drummers since then, and I've adapted to everything. Alex is such a great drummer that it inspires me as a bass player. I feel that now I want to up the stakes and be as unique as possible. I wear different hats in the band, with writing and so on, so I want to make sure that playing the bass is a major focus."

A lot of metal bass players find it difficult to find the tones they require for recording, judging by how many complaints we hear on the subject here, but not Gregoletto. "This album was maybe the quickest I've ever recorded when it came to getting the right tone, because I literally used my live rig. That was the first time I've done that in the studio. I've been using a Kemper live for a while, with a EBS compression pedal which I started using for live because Josh Wilbur, our producer, uses them on his albums. On the last record, the Kemper was blended with a re-amp of an EBS Fafner head, and I loved the way it sounded, but this time I used what I use every day because that's my sound, right there."

The youthful Gregoletto at the 2006 Download Festival

"The big change for the recording this time was that we did the drums last," he adds. "We had Alex play scratch tracks on an electric kit before we did guitars, bass and vocals, so it was all MIDI and we could change stuff if we needed to, which made it a lot easier. We could say 'Let's add a pause here', for example – and it's way easier to do that with MIDI drums than it is when the actual drums have already been recorded. In that case you have to try and do something in Pro-Tools, and it might not even be possible. That made things really easy."

Sounds like a real time-saver... "Oh man, it really is. We said afterwards, 'Why haven't we been doing this all along? It's way easier and so much faster'. The usual way, you have to build the drum kit and then you have to mic everything, so it's really labour-intensive. If you're doing that right at the start of the sessions, the guitars, bass and vocals are waiting around, saying 'When do we get to record?' This time we just cruised through, and also we could live with it for a few days before we sent it off

to get real drums put on it. This is our ninth record, so it's not gonna hurt to change things up and have a different workflow."

For some years now, Gregoletto has been playing a Warwick Corvette, having switched away from the BC Rich basses that he used for Trivium's early career. "It's pretty much only the Corvette double buck these days," he says. "I have two new ones that they made for me, which I haven't taken on tour yet. They're the same as the older one but they're neck-through and the neck is maple, which sounds a little different. Of course I loved my American-made BC Riches and I still have them, but Warwick's attention to detail, and the woods they use, are next level. The MEC pickups that they use allow you to change up any tones you want."

Apart from the EBS compressor mentioned above, his signal chain is fairly simple, he says. "The only other effects that I use are a Dunlop bass wah and the Darkglass Duality fuzz pedal. It mixes in a good amount of the clean signal, but the notes don't lose the low end. With a lot of fuzz pedals, the minute you put too much low end in it, it gets weird. I have a Darkglass plugin for the demos on my laptop, too. I always want those parts to sound like Cliff Burton's tone. For the wah, I found one of his Morley pedals, but I didn't want to take it on tour because I knew I'd never find a replacement if it broke. I needed something more compact, and the Dunlop pedal is great."

He continues; "I haven't used a cab live in years. Bass was ahead of the curve when it came to DI, I think. I feel like every bass player was using a Sansamp or something similar way before I ever heard of Kempers. Sansamps rule and you can't go wrong with them, so if someone said to me 'You can't use your Kemper today, here's a Sansamp instead' I could probably dial it up immediately. I got used to that when we started using in-ears."

So simple is best, then? He nods and explains: "It's a tried-and-tested setup. I don't like changing things when I'm happy with them. Years of experimenting have made me realise what I want and what I need to get there. Every time I've tried that, just to see what else is out there, I've instantly regretted it." Mark his words...

What The Dead Men Say is out now on Roadrunner.
Info: www.trivium.org,

SUMMER SALE

BIG SAVINGS ON OUR BEST-SELLING MAGAZINES

6 MONTHS FOR JUST £9.99

WORLDWIDE OFFER
$/€ 9.99

SEE THE ENTIRE RANGE ONLINE

www.myfavouritemagazines.co.uk/summer

***TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** This offer entitles new subscribers to receive their first 6 months for £9.99 for UK readers, €9.99 for Europe and $9.99 for rest of the world. After your trial ends, your subscription price will be adjusted to the standard 6-monthly recurring price. The biggest savings are those compared with the US RRP: for all savings details, see our online offer page. You can write to us to cancel your subscription within 14 days of purchase. Payment is non-refundable after the 14-day cancellation period unless exceptional circumstances apply. Your statutory rights are not affected. Prices correct at point of print and subject to change. Full details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available upon request. For full terms and conditions, please visit: bit.ly/magtandc. Offer ends 31 August 2020.

GEAR REVIEWS

Behold our world-beating bass gear review section, where we bring you the crop of each month's new, interesting or otherwise relevant bass guitars, bass amplifiers, bass cabs and bass effects. Occasionally we'll review a guitar effect if it's useful for bassists, but generally speaking, this zone is reserved for bass-specific gear.

We take our reviews seriously. *BGM* is the only print magazine devoted to bass in this country, and we have readers all over the world, so we're responsible about our conclusions. If a product is worth your time, we'll say so; if it's flawed, we'll make that clear. We're not beholden to advertisers in any way, and our tests are independent of the views of manufacturers and distributors.

When you read about a product here, you're getting a balanced review from an experienced bass tester. Value for money is at the top of our agenda in these cash-strapped times, but on the other hand, we believe in paying for quality.

Right, that's enough from me, and remember, this is just about the only place that it's good to have GAS!*

Joel McIver, Editor

*GAS = Gear Acquisition Syndrome (a malaise often suffered by bass players)

FENDER VINTERA 60S JAZZ

MODERN VINTAGE MVP4

BACCHUS WOODLINE JAZZ DX5AC-WBDP

MXR CLONE LOOPER, PIGTRONIX INFINITY 2

DB BASS ELBEE 10 SERIES II, EMBEE 12 AND EMBEE 1210 SERIES II CABINETS

FENDER
Vintera 60s Jazz

A Fender Jazz in Firemist Gold isn't a common sight, but does this J offer anything other than a pretty finish? Mike Brooks finds out

Fender
www.fender.com

£929

Fender's recent Vintera range has been a decent replacement for the Big F's Mexican-made Classic range, and its 60s Jazz basses come in three colour options – three-tone Sunburst, Daphne Blue and Firemist Gold. The last of these is so easy on the eye, and Fender have imbued the Vintera Jazz with so many vintage 60s features, that we had to check one out. We reviewed a Vintera Precision earlier in the year – so how does the J stand up?

Build Quality

Weighing in at 3.9 kilos or 8.6 pounds, this bass sits somewhere in the middle of bass weights – not especially light but not overly heavy either. The offset body-shape and classic curves, coupled with contouring front and back, add up to a totally familiar playing experience, and looks-wise, the body colour fits very well with the three-ply red tortoiseshell scratchplate and the warm colour of the 20-fret pau ferro fingerboard.

The bass is reasonably well set up, with no sharp frets that I could feel along either side of the neck, but the action was a little high for my tastes. This is easily remedied, of course. White dot position markers have been incorporated along the side and front-facing of the fingerboard, and with easy access to the upper frets via the lower cutaway, the player can quickly get to grips with this bass.

The hardware is robust and solidly attached. Open-geared reverse machine-heads maintain the vintage vibe, as do the threaded bridge saddles: these allow the string spacing, set as standard at 19mm, to be adjusted. The three-control setup (volume, volume, tone) is as effective as ever: this is, after all, a Jazz bass, with all the familiar touches which the name implies.

Sounds and Playability

It comes as no surprise that this Jazz variant is lively and resonant, when played unplugged, but what is impressive is that its natural bounce continues across all four strings and across the whole neck. If you want a bass with a spring in its tonal step, here it is. As Jazz players will know, the design has an identifiable tonal signature of its own, but it's not uncommon for there to be variations on the theme – some Js are darker-sounding than others, while some are brighter, and some supply buckets of sustain.

This bass has a tight, punchy character with a fair smattering

of natural growl in the midrange, which is particularly obvious when playing over the bridge pickup. The pickups themselves have been revoiced to provide a more accurate approximation of the original 1960s units, so the scooped sound of a 70s Jazz isn't quite so apparent. Instead, its warm rounded tone is accompanied by a gritty presence.

The warmth of the neck pickup is well suited to classic soul lines, and does an admirable job of covering the split-coil tone you'd get from a Precision. Bring the bridge unit into play and a raft of tight, bubbling sounds are provided. The tone is exactly as it should be – with a bright raspiness that adds clarity and definition.

The Vintera's playability is very pleasing – there's something extremely satisfying about picking up a Jazz from a new range and finding that all the classic hallmarks are there. The mid-60s C-shaped neck is also gloss finished and feels more rounded than a standard Jazz neck, but the narrow 38mm nut width helps to retain the slinkiness for which J-Basses are renowned.

Conclusion

This is a fine instrument – and at £929, it won't break the bank, while giving you all the classic Jazz Bass tones. Understandably, there's a lot of competition at this price, but the finish alone will no doubt pique a lot of interest. Do audition one...

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £929
Made In | Mexico
Body | Alder
Neck | Maple, 34" scale, gloss finish
Neck Join | Bolt-on, four-bolt attachment
Nut Width | 38mm
Fingerboard | Pau ferro
Frets | 20
Pickups | Fender 60s Jazz Bass single-coil pickups x 2
Electronics | Passive
Controls | Volume, volume, tone
Hardware | Chrome hardware, vintage bridge, vintage reverse open-gear machine heads
Weight | 3.9 kg / 8.59 lbs
Gigbag/case included | Deluxe gigbag
Left-hand available | No

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Tones, playability, authentic vibe
Minus | Competition is extreme; setup could have been better
Overall | Much to applaud – at a very good price

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

MODERN VINTAGE
MVP4

What does 'Modern Vintage' mean, anyway? Ace luthier Rob Elrick knows; ace bass-tester Stu Clayton finds out

Sonata Marketing
www.sonatamarketing.com

$1499

There's no shortage of new instruments that build on Leo Fender's classic designs, but the recently launched Modern Vintage basses have certainly caught our attention. Developed with the assistance of master luthier Rob Elrick, this South Korea-built range aims to evoke those classic designs while incorporating updates and improvements that retain the sound, look and feel of the instruments that inspired them. MV currently offer Jazz and Precision-inspired instruments, and we elected to put the latter through its paces.

Build Quality

The MVP4 was inspired by a 1962 Precision bass, and with the exception of the torrified – roasted, in other words – maple of the neck and headstock, that's exactly how the bass appears. With an Olympic White finish over an alder body, dot inlays and a four-ply tortoise shell pickguard, the vintage vibe is present and correct.

However, the updates to the original become evident as soon as you pick the instrument up. It's lighter, with reduced headstock dive thanks to the Hipshot Ultralite Clover Key tuners, and the neck has a significantly slimmer profile. The vintage small nickel frets and bridge saddle screws, in place of modern allen key adjustments, also reinforce the vintage vibe, although that is offset by the easy-access dual-action truss rod. In short, old and new sit comfortably next to each other here.

Build quality is exceptional across the instrument: the slim neck is beautifully smooth and easy to get around, and the fretwork is faultless. A quick peek under the hood reveals simple and neat wiring using cloth-covered wires, all of which are cut to the correct length, with no excess. Overall, the instrument has been finished to a high standard.

Sounds and Playability

Plugged in, the MVP4 has a naturally warm, resonant tone with excellent sustain. Although in theory the P-Bass configuration of only a simple volume and tone control is limiting, in reality it's surprisingly versatile if you remember that tone starts with your hands. With the tone rolled off, I find that the custom-wound 'split P' hum-cancelling pickup offers a very satisfying range when picking hand placement is brought into the equation.

Plucking close to the neck results in a fat, warm tone that evokes serious Motown vibes, and moving towards the middle of the instrument opens the sound up, adding a little more clarity, while picking close to the bridge brings yet more bite. This simple technique for altering tone is effective on any instrument, of course, but I was surprised at the sheer breadth of variety available here, with the pickup reacting to subtle position shifts exceptionally well.

Adding the tone control into the equation naturally takes the instrument into a whole other realm, of course, naturally offering up a bright P-Bass-like punch. With the tone control on full, the instrument responds to slap playing admirably: it's not a modern slap tone by any stretch, but it's got the thump and grind that makes the P-Bass so unexpectedly great for the technique.

Wielding a pick results in an equally enjoyable sonic experience, with an open tone control resulting in perfect rock or pop-punk tones. Rolling back in gradual increments adds further options, of course. Overall, the MVP4 is a versatile instrument, particularly with regard to the way it responds to differing playing positions. There's certainly a lot to work with here if you know how to get the best out of it.

In terms of physical playability, the instrument doesn't disappoint. I love playing a Precision as much as the next bassist, but I'm far happier with a slimmer neck profile than those traditionally offered. In that regard, this bass is very satisfying to play, with vintage tones bursting forth from an instrument that is, for me, far more comfortable to navigate. Again, the coming together of old and new has been executed extremely well here.

It should be noted that the Modern Vintage basses do not ship with a case of any kind, with the company noting that they have opted not to force the customer to pay for one, when it's likely that he or she will already own a case. As someone with an attic full of instrument cases, I can see some logic here… MV cases are available as a separate purchase should the customer want one.

Conclusion

Retailing at $1499, the MVP4 is no casual purchase, but we've been impressed enough to highly recommend trying one. As I noted at the beginning of this review, if you're looking for a modern, Fender-inspired instrument, there are a plethora of options out there, but the MVP4 is certainly among the finest of them that I've played. The instrument has clearly been conceived by a team that has a passion for the original, but which also knows just where to make small tweaks and modifications that make sense. Dare I say it, I think that Leo would approve.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | $1499
Made In | South Korea
Neck | Torrified Maple
Body | Alder
Neck Joint | Bolt-on, four bolt attachment
Frets | 20
Pickups | E1 x custom-wound hum-cancelling split pickup
Controls | Volume, Tone
Bridge | Vintage style bridge with steel saddles
Hardware | Hipshot Ultralite Clover Key tuners
Weight | 3.9 kg / 8.5 lbs
Case/gig bag included | No
Left-hand option available | No

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Classic vintage looks, sensible modern updates
Minus | Nothing
Overall | A very affectionate update to a classic

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■■
SOUND QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■□
VALUE	■■■■■■■■□□

BACCHUS

Woodline Jazz DX5AC-WBDP

A Japanese Super-Jazz? Mike Brooks heads to the land of the rising sun

The Bass Gallery
www.thebassgallery.com

£1650

We haven't had the pleasure of playing many Bacchus basses over the years, so it's about time we cast our gaze over one. This particular instrument is part of the handmade Woodline range and features several extra touches alongside the standard Jazz Bass features – so how much value do they add?

Build Quality

The familiar design template has been used to good effect, although there are some aesthetic changes. The burgundy scratchplate and black control plate stand out against the translucent white ash body; flip the bass over and the timber grain is clearly visible through the gloss lacquer. With effective contouring front and back, for the player's benefit and comfort, and considerable access to the upper frets courtesy of the extensive lower cutaway, this resembles a buffed-up Jazz bass.

Although it's a little weighty at 4.2 kilos and with a slight headstock bias, the bass balances perfectly well when placed on a strap. Overall, the instrument feels substantial and sturdy, and is blessed with a tight and solid neck pocket. The dark 24-fret ebony fingerboard features mother-of-pearl block inlays with black side dots inset into a green pearloid binding; this aesthetic has also been used on the underside of the fingerboard. The one-piece satin-finished maple neck has an impressive figuring of its own to show off.

The fingerboard may appear broad, and with a nut width of 46mm, it's not the slinkiest of five-string boards, but the exceptional setup, low action and 19mm string spacing contribute to provide an enjoyable playing experience. With no sharp frets and a very high level of finishing across the whole instrument, this bass plays and feels very impressive. With Gotoh hardware, including a top- and bottom-loading bridge with brass saddles, and a Bartolini active circuit alongside a pair of Bacchus single-coil pickups, this bass has benefited from high-quality components and a well-executed construction.

Sounds and Playability

If the physical features don't impress you, the tonal response certainly will. Played acoustically, this is a tonally rich instrument; notes simply resonate and sustain off the ebony board through the ash body; the choice of timbers really helps to accentuate the Bacchus's natural tonal qualities. How you attack the strings and your choice of playing style certainly affects the instrument's response – for example, percussive styles definitely benefit from the thick, hard tone offered by the ebony fingerboard.

Plug the Woodline in, and there isn't too much to differentiate the passive tone from the active tone. Both have a similar volume level, although the passive mode has enough woody grit to make the tone stand out. Switching to active mode brings the 'Super-Jazz' tonal options into play, where the Bartolini circuit is very effective. Both bass and treble controls offer power, definition and projection without sounding extreme or overblown. The low B-string performs admirably, with a surprising amount of presence in the low end, despite this bass having 'only' a 34" scale length, and with a shallow D-shaped neck profile, it has an exceptionally comfortable neck.

Conclusion

Any bass that can match effortless playability with a versatile array of tones is likely to prove popular, and this bass is a prime example of that combination. There is much about this Bacchus that would appeal to a four-string player making the switch to five-string, as the tones are strong, the setup and build quality are very high and it comes full of classy touches and features. I can't imagine any player being disappointed by it in any department. I would strongly advise tracking one down and giving it a spin.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £1650
Made In | Japan
Colour | Translucent white, gloss finish
Body | Ash, two-piece
Neck | Maple, 34" scale, satin finish
Neck Joint | Bolt-on, four-bolt attachment
Nut Width | 46mm
Fingerboard: Ebony
Frets | 24
Pickups | Bacchus JB-ALV single-coil pickups x 2
Electronics | Bartolini XTCT active circuit
Controls | Volume (push/pull for turbo boost), balance, treble, bass, active/passive switch
Hardware | Black and brass hardware, Gotoh 404 SJ-5 bridge, Gotoh GB11W machine heads
Weight | 4.2 kg / 9.26 lbs
Case/gig bag included | Gigbag
Left-hand option available | Yes, as a custom order

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Bold tones
Minus | A little weighty
Overall | A high-calibre instrument that begs to be played

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■□
SOUND QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■□
VALUE	■■■■■■■■■□

MXR Clone Looper

PIGTRONIX Infinity 2

We're in the mood for looping in this issue. After all, it was good enough for Jaco, right? Let's send loop lord Steve Lawson off to review two of 'em...

MXR	Pigtronix	£160, £199
www.westsidedistribution.com	www.jhs.co.uk	

Over the last couple of decades, no area of music technology has become more ubiquitous than the loop pedal. From looping's esoteric beginnings as an extension of *musique concrète* to Ed Sheeran playing Wembley Stadium with nothing but a guitar and a looper, the times have a-changed.

While many of the recent developments in looping technology have involved ever bigger and more elaborate looping devices, let's take a look at two brand new units designed to fit snugly onto even the smallest of pedalboards – the MXR Clone Looper and the Pigtronix Infinity 2.

MXR Clone Looper

The Clone Looper is MXR's first foray into looping technology. Using the same form factor as their classic stomp boxes, they've set about squeezing as much functionality into a tiny pedal as they can. The basic loop functions of record, play, stop and overdub are instantly accessible via the two buttons, with the record button allowing you to go from the first loop into overdub, so delay and reverb tails don't get cut off, or jump straight to playback if you want to play melody straight away over the first loop. It's a useful, musical distinction that's missing from a lot of loop pedals.

The extended utility of the Clone Looper includes the option to go double speed or half speed and reverse the loop, as well as undo and redo the last layer with a long press of the play button. Long presses can be problematic for time-specific interactions with the music, making it tricky to have things happen on the exact beat where you want them to – in this case appear or disappear – but such compromises are to be expected on a looper this compact, and the trade-off is more than worth it.

Accessing the half/double speed and reverse functions is done either via a push button mounted under the central volume control, or via a far more gig-friendly external footswitch. MXR's own Tap switch works perfectly and takes up the tiniest amount of extra pedalboard space.

One of the most useful additions to the Clone Looper is an expression pedal socket that controls the volume of the loop. Being able to fade loops in and out is such an obvious musical interaction that it can be really frustrating when loopers miss out this option.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

MXR Clone Looper
Price | £160
Features | Volume rotary control; two footswitches, Rec/Dub, Speed, Reverse, Play/Stop indicators
Dimensions | 50mm / 1.96" (H) x 111mm / 4.37" (W) x 63mm / 2.5" (D)
Weight | 308g / 0.68 lb

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■□
SOUND QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■■
VALUE	■■■■■■■■■■

Pigtronix Infinity 2
Price | £199
Features | Volume and Decay rotary controls; two footswitches, Stop, Once, Octave, Undo indicators
Dimensions | 33mm / 1.3" (H) x 114mm / 4.5" (W) x 66mm / 2.6" (D)
Weight | 454g / 1 lb

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■■
SOUND QUALITY	■■■■■■■■■■
VALUE	■■■■■■■■■□

The expression socket can also be used with an additional Tap switch to trigger a 'play once' one-shot sampler function.

In use, this pedal is a dream. The audio quality is very high, the pedal is as robust as we've come to expect from MXR, and the range of interactions with any looped material makes for a deeply satisfying musical experience. The option to record at half speed and then switch to double speed, giving you four times the playback speed at two octaves up, is an effect that gets really addictive.

Pigtronix Infinity 2

Unlike MXR, Pigtronix have been in the looper game for quite a while, with their flagship Infinity Looper offering a very comprehensive suite of looping tools and even MIDI control over so much of the process. Condensing the best of what they've learned about looping into a stomp box form factor was never going to be easy, but the focus they've brought to the task shows just how much musical thought has gone into this design.

The footswitch layout of the Infinity 2 looks similar to the Clone Looper, but differs in some very significant ways. In keeping with the emphasis of the original Infinity pedal, this updated version is designed to create two separate loops and switch between them. The ease with which you can lay down an initial groove, layer on top of it, then switch to Loop 2 for the chorus, record that, layer it, and switch back again, with all the switching happening seamlessly at the end of each loop, is hugely impressive. If what you're looking for is a songwriting and arranging tool – which is useful for stripped-down performances – the Infinity 2 is a godsend.

It's also significant here that the Infinity 2 can either be a true stereo pedal – which is great for preserving the ping-pong delays and rich reverbs you may have on your pedalboard – or it can be used to split the main signal and the loop signal to separate outputs. The uses for this are many and varied, offering the possibility to record the loop to a separate track in your DAW; to add post-processing to the loop or the clean signal without affecting the other; or even to have the loop go to a completely different amp on stage. This enables the option to have a bass part looped through a bass amp, while your melodies and additions over the top go straight to the PA, or through a second amp.

Again, like the Clone Looper, the Infinity 2 has a load of extra ways to interact with the loop via hand controls. The Mode button offers the possibility of dropping the loop to half speed, switching it to 'play once' mode, or having an extended range of ways to stop, including a really nifty 'fade out' option. Again, the musical origins of Pigtronix's design process shine through, and all the additions have an immediate and obvious creative application. There's also an undo/redo mode that works the same way as the Clone Looper.

An extension footswitch is advisable to access the 'play once', stop and octave functions without bending over, but the Decay knob will have you reaching for the pedal with your hands anyway, offering the possibility to add to your loops as the existing layers gradually fade away. It's a deeply musical and useful way to interact with the looped material and evolve between sections.

Conclusion

Complaints? There are very, very few. I'd love to have the Decay feature on the Infinity 2 available via expression pedal, and the Clone Looper is sensitive to the kind of power supply you use with it. Running it off one of my existing pedalboard power supplies yielded some undesirable noise, but with a Dunlop power supply, it's absolutely silent. Beyond that, the features and build are top notch.

Both products focus on performance, avoid extraneous practice tools such as metronomes and stored loops, and both offer a distinct set of tools that will enhance any looping musician's performance. The Infinity is the solid choice for song structure and arranging as well as the side-chain routing option, while the slightly more affordable Clone offers more in terms of interactivity and that oh-so-useful volume pedal option. Make your choice, and get looping!

DB BASS

Elbee 10 Series II, Embee 12, Embee 1210 Series II Cabinets

Why compromise on cabs, say London-based DB Bass. Mike Brooks gets the lowdown on the low end

The Gallery	DB Cabs
www.thebassgallery.com	www.db-bass.com

£395, £595, £795

With an eye on portability, an ear on sonic performance and a finger on knuckle damage, DB Bass have looked at the light, portable speakers currently on the market and brought their own improvements to the design. All three configurations here are constructed from high-grade birch plywood, using a self-bracing design that reduces resonance while enhancing tight low-end tones. Each cabinet is covered with hand-applied, tough-textured paint, and has recessed carrying handles. These, we're told, require less twist and offer player-friendly carrying angles for the wrist, arm and hand. The design is completed with a rigid steel grille and steel corners for cabinet protection, so they're certainly built with the aim of lasting a good few years on the road.

Using an Aguilar TH700 amp and a mix of active and passive basses, the cabinets are put through their respective paces. The Elbee 10 is deceptively loud and punchy and even with an active five-string bass, it seems able to cover a lot of sonic ground, with a powerful low-end response coupled with a tight midrange. It also manages very well when pushed by the amp, particularly when I add a significant amount of drive to the signal. How it will manage on its own as a single cab in a band context will depend on the demands placed on it, but for home practice or acoustic-based performance, it will perform well.

The Embee 12 has the most distinctive top-end response of all three cabs, due in no small part to its piezo tweeter. The low end is solid and effective, but the overall tone is rather fizzy, which will only suit players looking for such a sound. Slappers and tappers will no doubt gravitate towards this cab, the high end making their dusty-end of the neck travels stand out. Coupled with the Elbee 10, it provides good coverage across a wide frequency range – and the benefit of improved portability, due to spreading the load across two enclosures, is no bad thing.

The Embee 1210 is a real head-turner – powerful and full-sounding with plenty of finesse and detail. This cab offers a punchy midrange: the 10" driver provides a clear top-end response without becoming too glassy. In addition, stand in front of the cabinet and you'll reap the benefits of the Max-Flo system with which the angled driver improves clarity and low-end delivery for the player.

If you're in the market for new cabs and feel uninspired by the standard units from other companies, you should certainly audition these DB Bass enclosures – you may well be converted...

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Price | £395, £595, £795
Made In | UK
Power | 500, 600, 750 watts RMS
Impedance 4 ohm (8 and 16 ohm available), 4 ohm (8 ohm available), 4 ohm
Frequency Response | 60Hz-4kHz, 45Hz-30kHz, 45Hz-20kHz
Speakers | 1x10" FaitalPRO (Neodymium) driver; 1x12" FaitalPRO (Neodymium) driver, piezo with attenuator; 1x10" and 1x12" FaitalPRO (Neodymium) drivers
Connections | 2 x Neutrik Speakon
Dimensions | 415mm / 16.3" (H) x 295mm / 11.6" (W) x 345mm / 13.6" (D), 462mm / 18.2" (H) x 375mm / 14.8" (W) x 455mm / 17.9" (D), 610mm / 24" (H) x 375mm / 14.8" (W) x 455mm / 17.9" (D)
Weight | 10.4kg (22.92 lbs), 17kg (37.48 lbs), 23.8kg (52.47 lbs)

WHAT WE THINK

Plus | Interesting features, sensible designs and impressive performance
Minus | So much competition
Overall | Well worth looking at

BGM RATING

BUILD QUALITY
SOUND QUALITY
VALUE

Music Week

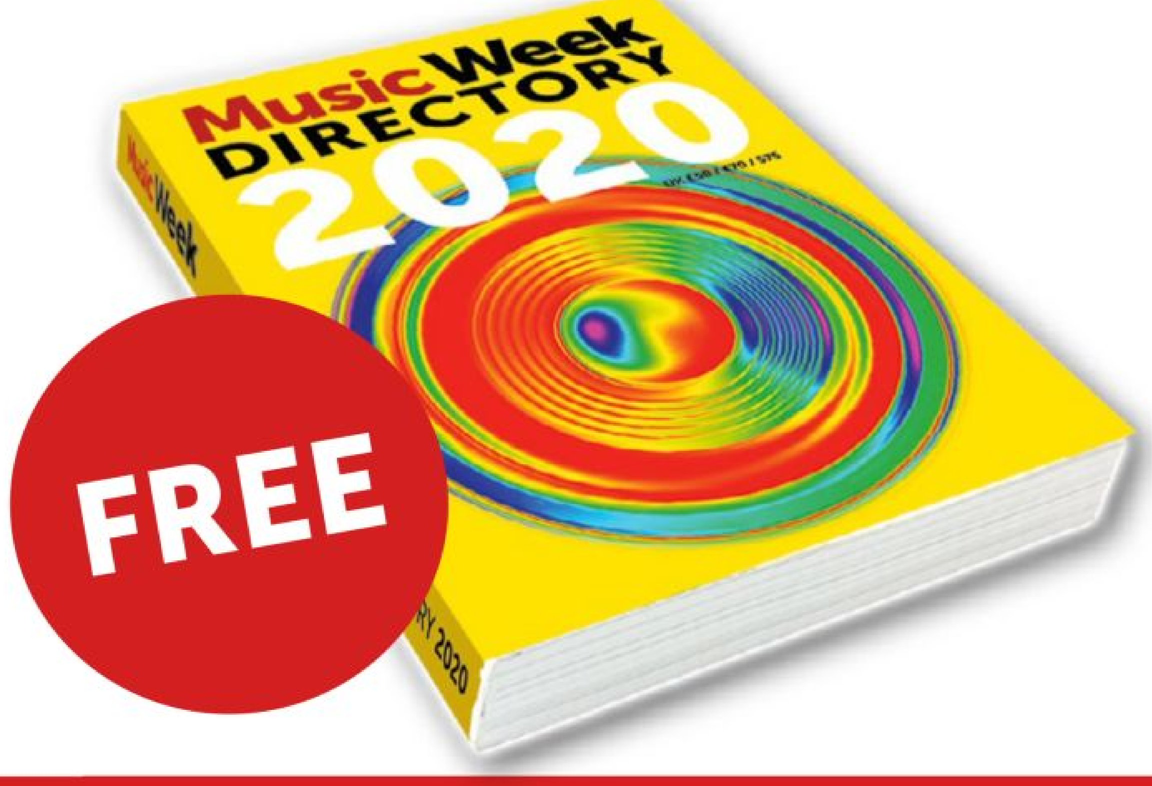
Inside the business of music. Established 1959

Subscribe from just £9 a month for six months

6 GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE:

1. Delivered every Monday to help you set your agenda for the week ahead
2. Access a wealth of news, new music coverage, thought-leadership and chart information in subscriber-only content
3. Read insightful opinion, analysis and first-looks at exciting new artists
4. Stay ahead of the game with our daily Morning Briefing newsletter
5. Bag the Music Week Directory worth £50 – **absolutely FREE**
6. **Pay from just £9 a month for 6 months – that's practically 40% off the normal cost of a subscription**

DELIVERED STRAIGHT TO YOUR DOOR OR ON THE GO EVERY WEEK FOR SIX MONTHS



SUBSCRIBE NOW

Online: bit.ly/MW6MONTHS

NB: This off er is only for new subscribers to Music Week from 23 April 2020. This is not for existing subscribers to Music Week.

BASS TUITION

Making you a better bass player

Welcome to our tuition section, in which *Bass Guitar Magazine* collates the wit and wisdom of the *crème de la crème* of the electric and upright bass world. We're fortunate enough to have some serious talent on the team, from world-class music educators to experienced touring musicians, who between them have laid down the low notes in every studio, club and arena in the civilised world. Note that we've divided the columns according to Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced level for easy reference. Whether you're looking to improve your playing technique, expand your awareness of theory, set up your rig to sound like your particular bass hero or simply get on a bus and tour, we provide the answers you need here. What are you waiting for? Dive in... **Joel McIver, editor**

Kickstart your journey to the top of the bass world here!

Steve Lawson is the UK's most celebrated solo bass guitarist. Across nearly two decades of touring, and a huge catalogue of solo and collaborative albums, he's built up a worldwide audience for his looping and processing approach to bass sound. Recent collaborators include Beardyman, Reeves Gabrels, Andy Gangadeen, Tanya Donelly, Divinity Roxx and Jonas Hellborg. He been teaching bass for over two decades, and lectures at universities and colleges across the globe. Victor Wooten once commented, 'Steve Lawson is a brilliant musician. I've known about him and listened to him for many years. He may not be one of the most famous bassists – but he is definitely one of the most talented'. Who are we to argue?
www.stevelawson.net

STEVE LAWSON

Beginners **50**

Now you're rolling with theory and techniques, it's time to hit the next level

Philip Mann studied at the London College of Music, securing bachelor's and master's degrees in performance before receiving a scholarship to study under Jeff Berlin at the Players School of Music in Florida. Endorsed by Overwater and Vanderkley, he's now a busy international freelancing electric and double bassist. His performance and session credits include work with double Grammy Award-winning guitarist Albert Lee, five-time Grammy Award nominee Hunter Hayes, Deep Purple's Steve Morse, Billy Bragg and country artist Peter Donegan. He has featured as a solo demonstration artist at the London Bass Guitar Show every year since 2012 and is currently a member of the visiting faculty at the Players School while also lecturing for Scott's Bass Lessons.

PHIL MANN

Intermediate **54**

Take the bass world by storm with the ultimate tuition section

Stuart Clayton has been a professional musician, writer and transcriber since 2002 and has worked in function bands, cruise ship gigs, theatre shows and more. He spent four years recording and touring the world with legendary Emerson, Lake & Palmer drummer Carl Palmer and has worked for *BGM* since its first issue. Since 2007 Stuart has worked as the Head of the Bass Department at BIMM Bristol, where he continues to teach all levels of the degree course. In addition, he has also worked as the Bass Guitar Technical Specialist for the Rockschool exam board. Stuart now runs Bassline Publishing, which publishes transcription books for bassists such as Mark King, Marcus Miller, Stuart Hamm, Bernard Edwards, Stuart Zender and John Entwistle, as well as an acclaimed range of tuition books.

STUART CLAYTON

Advanced **60**

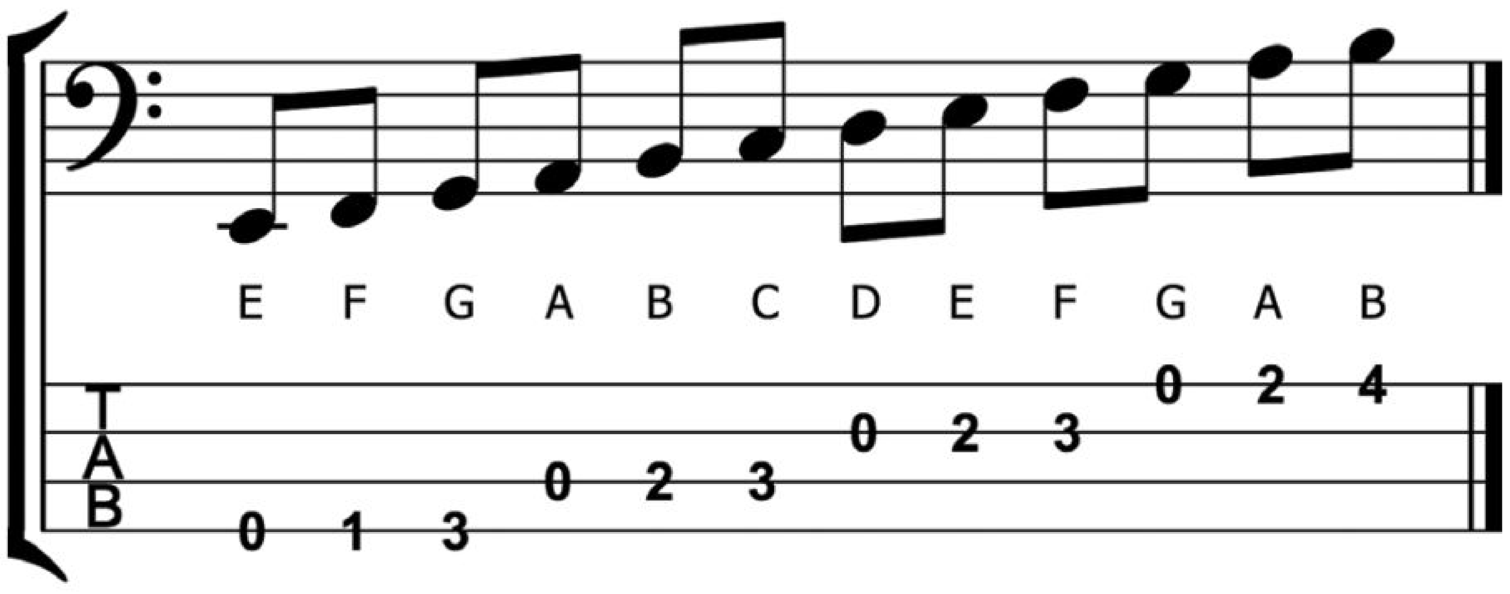
BGM Notation Legend

The following is a guide to the notation symbols and terminology used in *Bass Guitar Magazine*

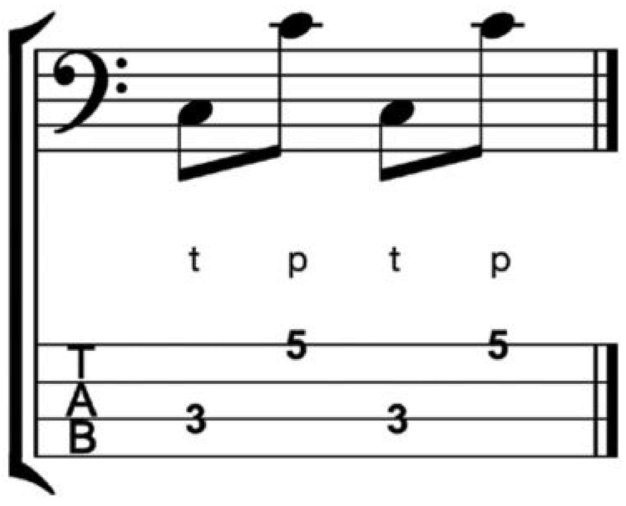
The Stave: most music written for the bass guitar uses the bass clef. The example to the right shows the placement of the notes on the stave.

Tablature: this is a graphical representation of the music. Each horizontal line corresponds with a string on the bass guitar, with the lowest line representing the lowest pitched string (E). The numbers represent the frets to be played. Numbers stacked vertically indicate notes that are played together. Where basses with five or six strings are required, the tablature stave will have five or six lines as necessary.

Notes shown in brackets indicate that a note has been tied over from a previous bar.

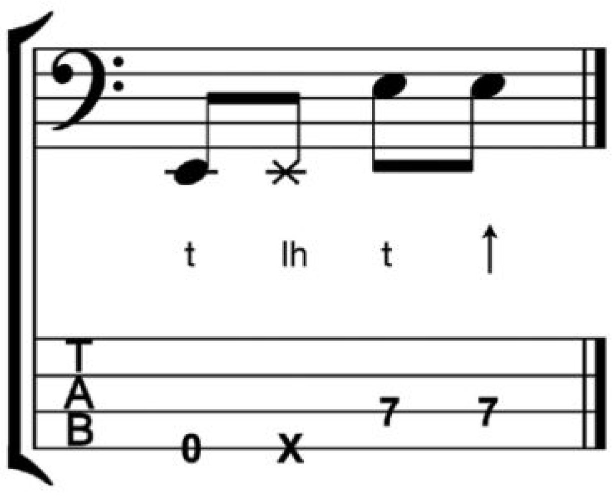


PLAYING TECHNIQUES



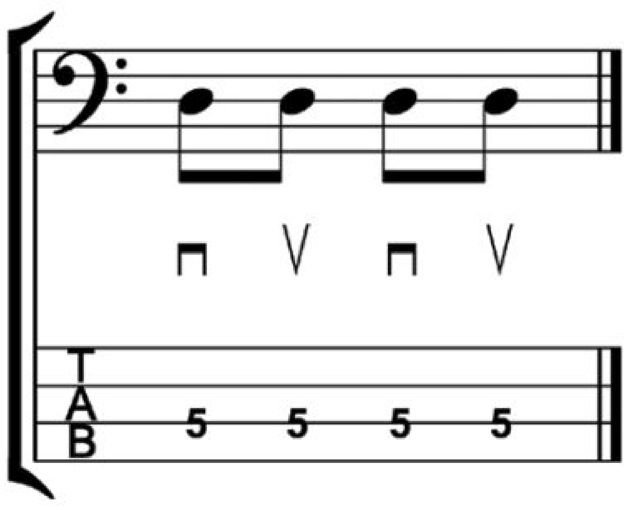
SLAP AND POP TECHNIQUE

Notes slapped with the thumb are marked with a ‘t’, notes popped with the fingers marked with a ‘p’



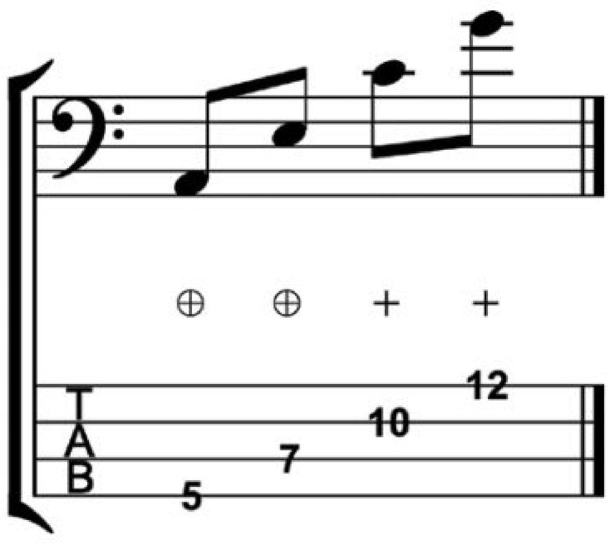
ADVANCED SLAP TECHNIQUE

Fretting hand slaps are marked ’lh’ and double thumbing upstrokes are shown with an upward pointing arrow



PLECTRUM TECHNIQUE

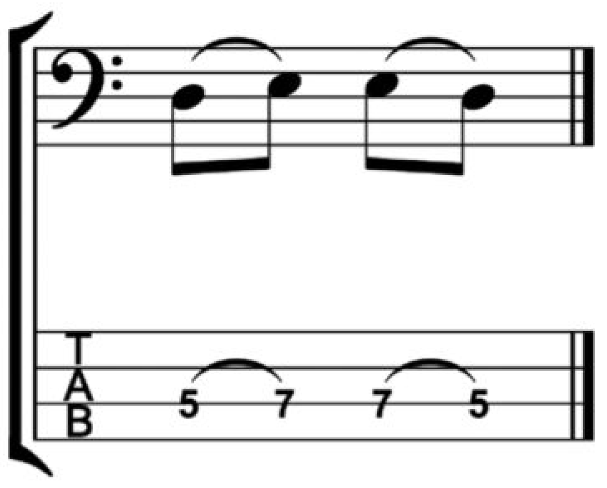
Where necessary, down and upstrokes with the pick will be shown using these symbols (down-up-down-up)



TAPPING TECHNIQUES

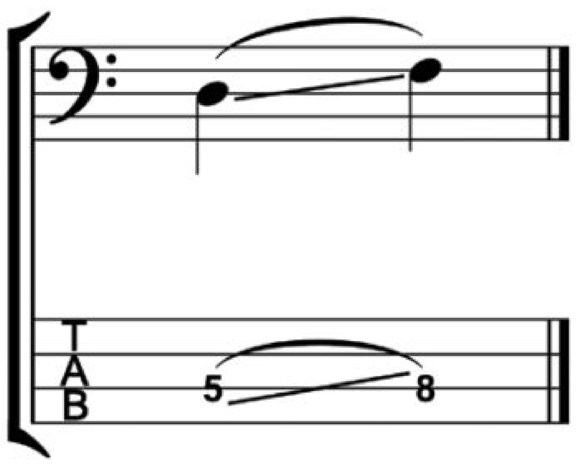
Fretting hand taps are shown with a ‘+’ in a circle. Picking hand taps are just ‘+’. Particular fingers may be shown with numbers.

FRETTING TECHNIQUES



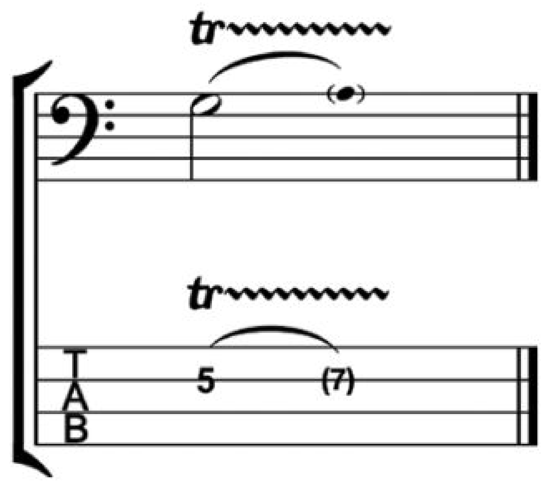
HAMMER-ON AND PULL-OFF

Hammer-ons and pull-offs are shown with a slur over the notes. Only the first note is plucked by the picking hand



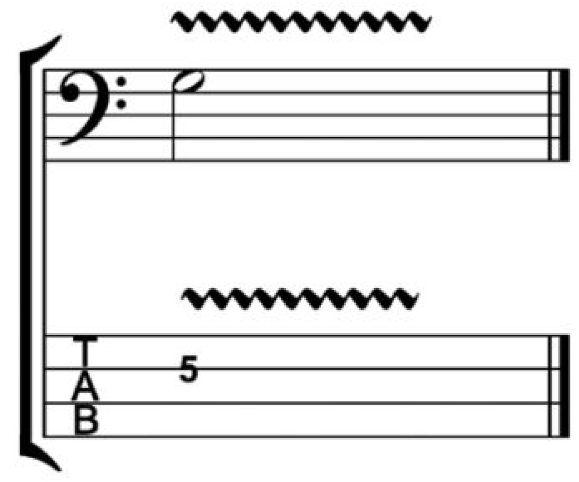
SLIDE (GLISSANDO)

Slides are performed by playing the first note then sliding the fretting finger up to the second note



TRILLS

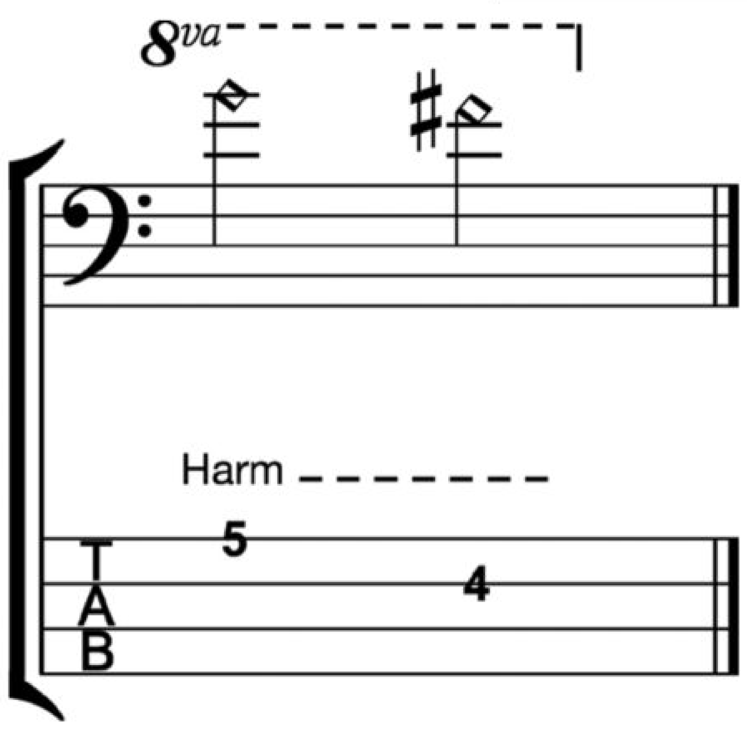
Trills are performed by rapidly alternating between the two notes shown using hammer-ons and pull-offs



VIBRATO

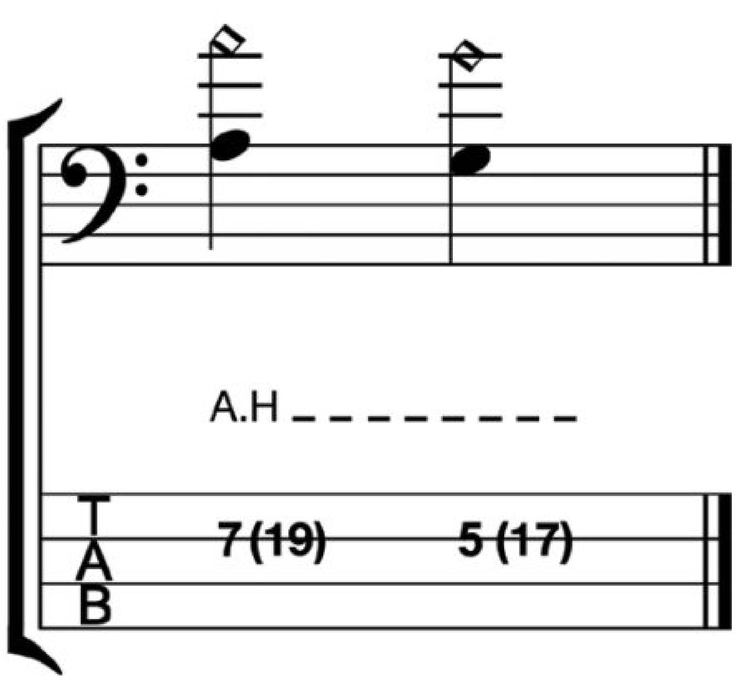
The pitch of the note is altered by repeatedly bending the string up and back with the fretting finger

PLAYING HARMONICS



NATURAL HARMONICS

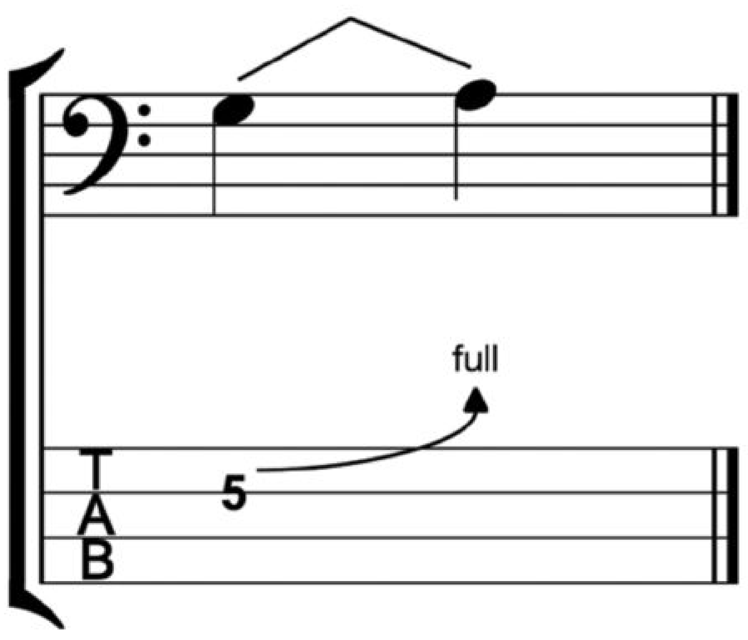
The note is played as a harmonic by lightly touching the string above the fret indicated



ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS

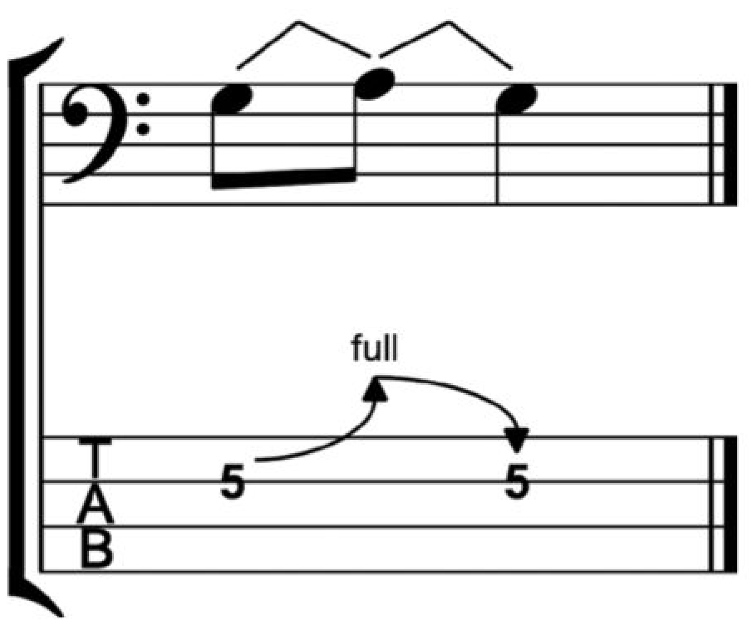
Pluck the string while fretting the lower note and touching the edge of the picking hand’s thumb to the note in brackets

BENDING NOTES



BEND

The note is bent upwards to the interval specified: ½ = semitone, full = tone



BEND AND RELEASE

The note is bent up to the interval indicated then released back to its original pitch

STEVE LAWSON

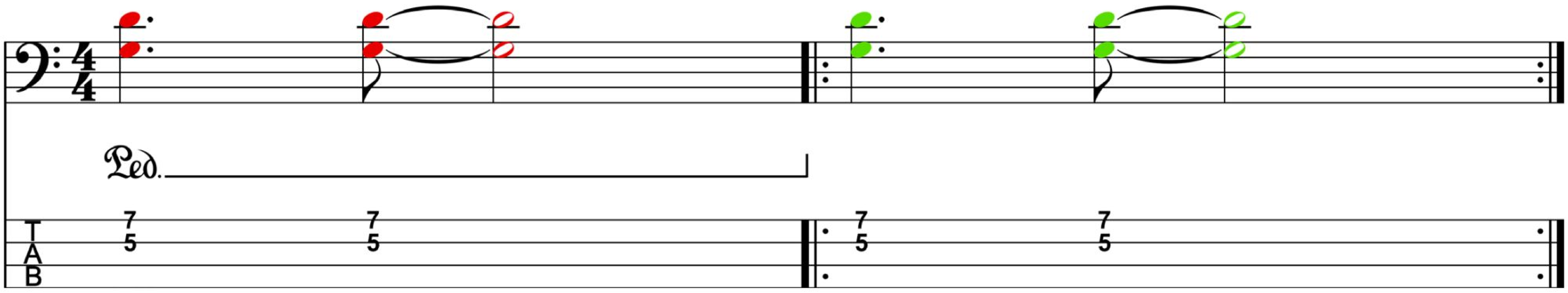
Beginners' Tutorial

If you enjoyed Steve Lawson's initial journey into looping last month, you're going to love this… Prepare your stomping foot!

Welcome back! I hope you've been having fun with the looping exercises we were looking at last month. This time, we're going to talk a little bit about how we can use a looper to build more complex arrangements without having to overstretch ourselves technically. It's worth pointing out at this point that any of these exercises can be done by recording the looped parts into a computer and looping them inside a digital audio workstation (or DAW), such as Garageband or Reaper. However, you just don't get the option for real-time interaction that way, and you won't get to explore the specific timing-centred learning that starting and stopping loops offers us – so let's keep it old-school.

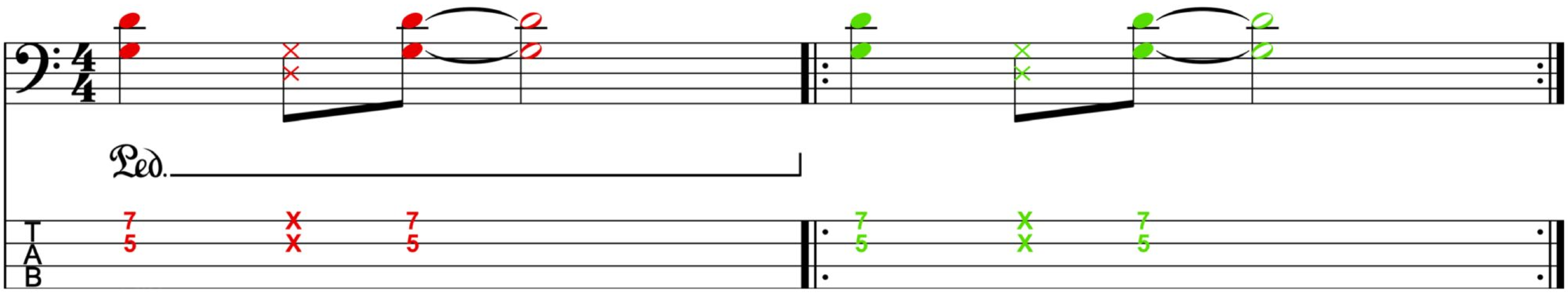
Let's start this month by playing a two-note double stop – that is, two notes played at the same time – which we're going to loop. We'll then play various bass lines along with it in order to explore what's possible. Here's our first double stop:

Example 1



Playing a 'push', without any kind of rhythm to play it against, is itself a really good exercise in developing your internal clock. You can try practising this against a metronome or drum track first, too. It can sometimes help to bring our picking hand down onto the strings on beat 2 for a percussive hit, to help define the beat a little more. That would look like this:

Example 2



Take your time over these. There are only two notes, a fifth apart, repeated and looped, but putting all of that together in a way that you're happy to listen to for 20 minutes while we play things against it may take a few attempts! Now, what chord do you think that is? The lowest note of the two is a G and the highest is a D. That might imply a G chord of some sort, right? Well, the best answer to this was something Abraham Laboriel said to me many years ago when I asked him in an interview what the single best thing about being a bass player was: 'A C chord isn't a C chord until I say it's a C chord'.

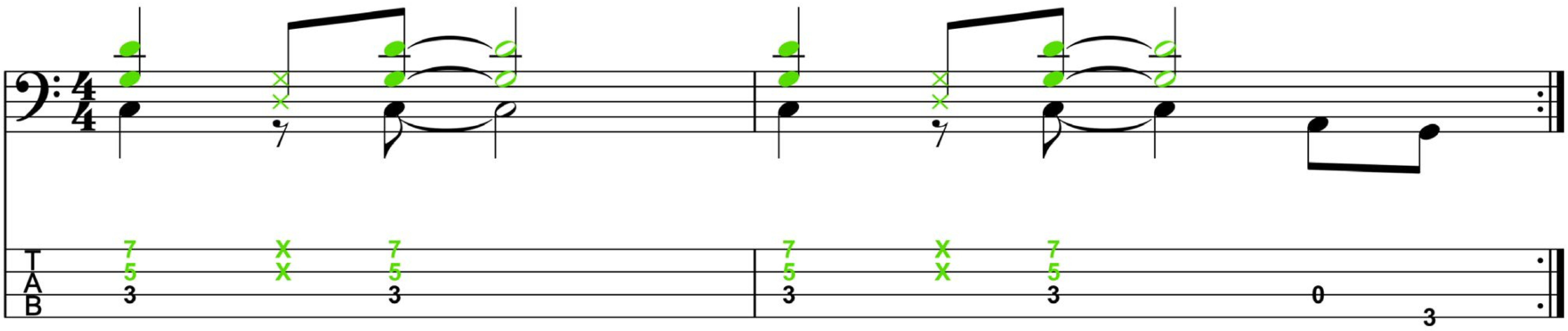
Without the presence of a bass note, that pair of notes could be one of several different things. Indeed, as we change the bass note under those two, we'll hear how their function within each chord changes dramatically. Changing one note in a bass-line can completely lift – or indeed, wrong-foot – a piece of music. This exercise will allow us to explore that phenomenon without having to learn loads about complex chords and how to play them. Hurrah!

So, now that we've got our loop to play against, we can start adding bass notes and see what happens. While it may seem obvious that we would start with a G in the bass, I'm actually going to start with a C. The chord that will be formed by playing a C under this loop is referred to as a Csus2 – that is, a C chord where the 3rd in the chord has been replaced by the 2nd. The 2nd will be one step above the root, or in this case, the octave. So in the key of C Major, that's a D. Now our C, G, D chord gives us a root (C) a 5th (G) and the 2nd up the octave. Intervals expanded beyond the octave are sometimes referred to as 'compound' intervals, so this would be a compound 2nd. Alternatively, you can name them by their extension into the next octave – so this would be a 9th. However, the problem with calling it a 9th is that in chord-naming terms that implies a completely different kind of chord, so we're going to stick with 2nd. All clear? Good! Here's our C against it:

Getty

The great Abraham Laboriel, a hero in our world

Example 3

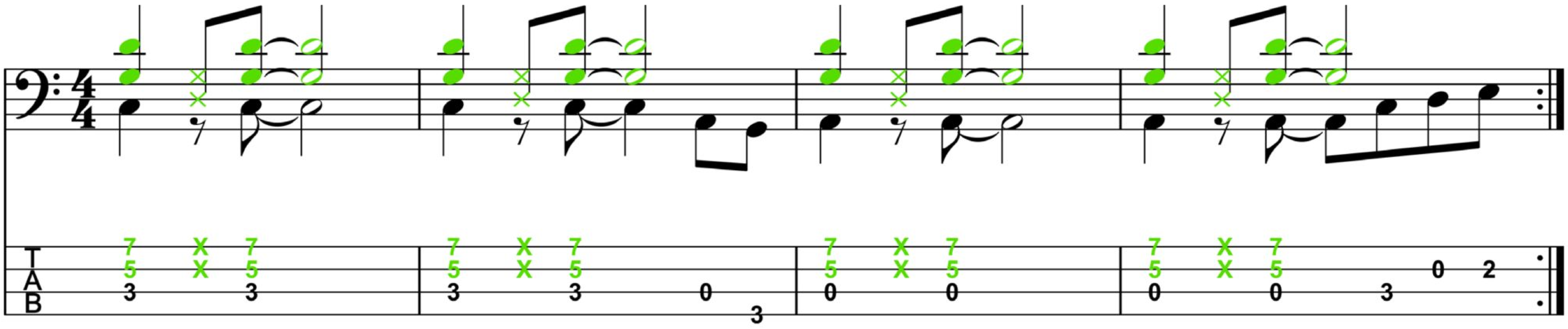


Remember last month we said that the green note heads were the notes that were playing back in the looper? We have those on this stave for reference, and the black note heads are what you're actually playing. This allows us to see how the two lines interlock: the percussive 'hit' on beat 2 in the loop doesn't happen in the bass-line, and the little two-note turnaround at the end of the two-bar bass line doesn't happen in the loop. So we need to be able to anticipate the timing of the loop, and also use that percussive muted sound to help orient ourselves within the groove.

The back and forth here between what's being played by the looper and what we're playing against it is the essence of what is required to play with any machine-based performance tool. If it's a sequencer, human variation is less likely to be a factor in defining what that fixed rhythm is. That said, we'll still need to listen to a pattern and, based on that listening, start to formulate a sense of what's happening in the groove. Then we'll see where our line fits, either on top of or against the notes that are being played in the loop. The more sparse the machine part is, the fewer points of correction we'll have as we go on – and the more we'll need to train our internal clock to anticipate those rhythmic elements and play in a musical way.

Okay, let's look at what happens when we change the bass note. We're now going to double the length of the phrase and have a different bass note in the third and fourth bars. Let's play it and then talk about what's happening to the harmony (see page 52):

Example 4



Right, does that sound good? That's what matters. Before anything else, we can experiment with finding things that sound good. To paraphrase Brad Pitt, the first rule of Loop Club is to use it to make great-sounding music. Clever looping tricks were probably a useful gimmick 20 years ago when I started out gigging solo – and I'm guessing the looping thing had a pretty big appeal for some of my audience back then. However, successive generations of pop musicians using loopers – from KT Tunstall and Imogen Heap to Ed Sheeran and Beardyman – means that the gimmicky side of it is way less interesting to us and our audience than the musical possibilities are.

So here we have the results of a 'what if' exploration. We had a chord and a given bass note. The 'what if' here is:

> "THE WORST THAT CAN HAPPEN IS THAT IT SOUNDS BAD. IN THAT CASE, SIMPLY TRY SOMETHING ELSE..."

'What if I just change the bass note? What happens?' Remember, the worst that can happen is that it sounds bad. That's really not a bad outcome for an experiment. No-one will get hurt, nothing will explode, you'll just have made a noise that's less than ideal – which means that you simply go on to try something else.

One of my favourite things about a looper is that it allows players who aren't particularly dexterous to experiment with more complex musical forms. It also doesn't require us to learn hugely complex sets of harmonic theory to start that experimentation. In our case, our choice of an A was informed by the harmonic knowledge we already have,

It's Spinal Tap, with the mighty bassist Derek Smalls at centre. Nigel Tufnel (left) is cited in this column, and why not?

Getty

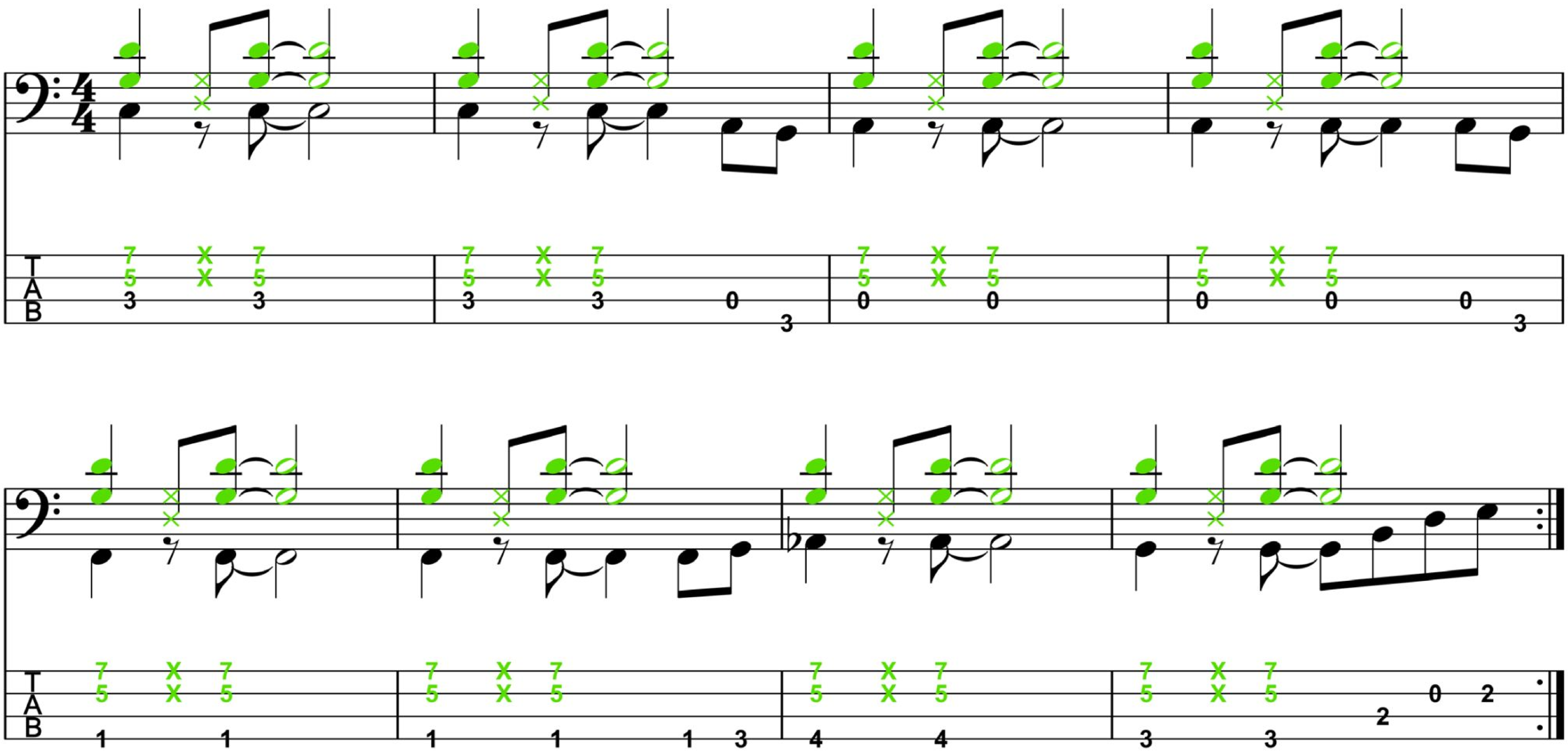
both practically and through the lessons in this column. We know that if we're in the key of C, any of the other natural (in other words, not sharp or flat) notes are in the same key. The practical knowledge is that, in your learning of songs, you'll have realised that the most common chords to follow the root in any given key are the 4th, 5th and 6th chords. In this case, F Major, G Major and A minor.

I chose A, somewhat arbitrarily, and instead of worrying about whether I could rationalise it on paper, I just listened to what it did to our little progression. We've now gone from C, G, D, which we've explained is a Csus2 chord, to A, G, D which is a... What? G is seven notes above the A, and D is a compound 4th, which means 11 notes up the scale from A. There are a number of ways to label what that chord implies in this context: A7sus4, Amin11, G/A... But none of them are as important as answering the question 'Do I like it?', because that's the final part of our 'what if'. I've chosen to do something based either on my theory knowledge or just blind chance, so now I need to make an aesthetic judgement about whether I like it or not.

Here's a secret for you. An awful lot of amazing-sounding musicians have no idea what they're doing. That's not intended to absolve you of the task of finding out what you're up to. There's no value in making life harder for yourself by intentionally resisting the acquisition of knowledge. However, I encourage you to experiment alongside knowledge acquisition, and see that our end goal of playing great-sounding music is a pretty open-ended pursuit, and can be found through a number of intersecting paths. At any one time, our theory learning, or learning from other people's songs, our pattern recognition and ear training can be richly supplemented by some 'what if' exploration. Letting our curiosity guide us can reap rich rewards.

Finally, let's focus on what the looper is allowing us to do here. We have a single-bar loop that in no way restricts us to playing single-bar phrases against it. We can play chord progressions as long as we want, keeping the notes in the loop as the fixed notes and varying everything else in the bass-line and melody. The looper teaches us that, in any situation, the 'givens' are often way more fluid than we might imagine. We can even change key if we want, so long as the place we end up still makes use of those two notes. Try this line:

Example 5



You may recognise the harmonic movement as being based on the verse chords to 'Lovely Day' by the late, great Bill Withers. It's in C Major, but there's that A♭ just before the G. Again, from a theory perspective, that's a thorny explanation (it's A♭Major7#11, if you're taking notes!) but we're totally unconcerned about that right now.

Here, we're just moving around, playing patterns we're familiar with, in and around the key of C. We can keep the loop the same and move to other keys, and we can try minor scales instead of major and see what happens (C minor is actually where the A♭ comes from), but we can try all kinds of other stuff, too. We can start to hear way more subtle and complex harmonies without needing to do a deep dive into Mark Levine's Jazz Theory Book or spend 10 years learning how to two-handed tap these lines. Learning jazz theory and two-handed tapping are both worthy and advisable creative pursuits – but they aren't a prerequisite for experimentation.

"IF THE LOOPER TEACHES US ANYTHING, IT'S THAT, LIKE SPINAL TAP'S NIGEL TUFNEL, WE CAN EXPLORE THE RICH PLEASURES OF 'SIMPLE LINES INTERTWINING'"

If the looper teaches us anything, it's that, like Spinal Tap's Nigel Tufnel, we can explore the rich pleasures of 'simple lines intertwining'. Enjoy your practice, and I'll see you next month for more loopy fun!

PHIL MANN

Intermediate Tutorial

Tap (geddit?) into your talent with the great Phil Mann, who returns to us once again to add a dose of percussive cool to your playing

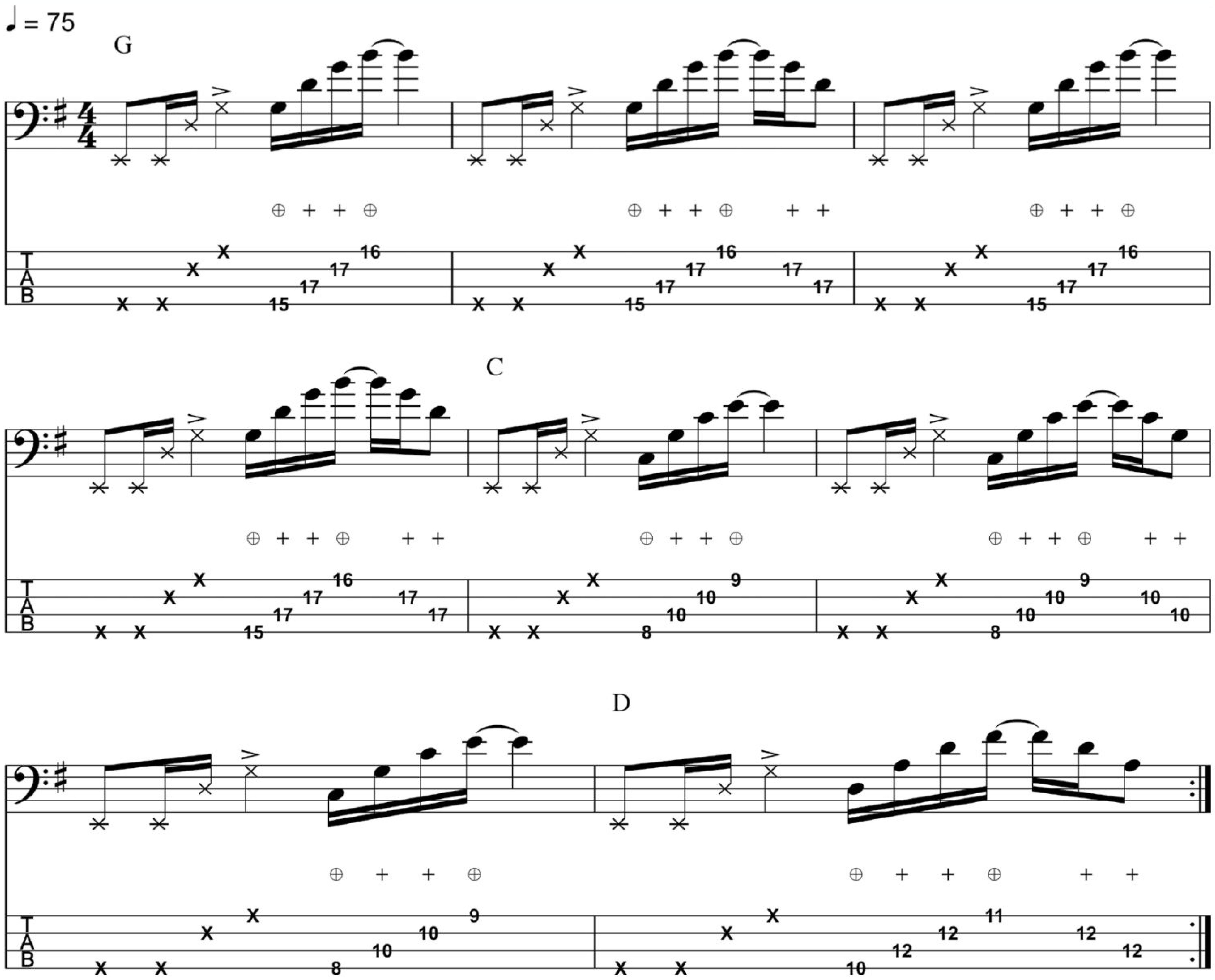
This month, let's take yet another technical stride forward with the introduction of tapping. The ability to master this technique can be a wonderful resource for many bass players, as it allows vast harmonic information to be presented in an unorthodox manner.

Consider how pianists have the ability to deliver entire harmonic structures in an arpeggiated format: with this technique, we can genuinely enhance the traditional bass player's vocabulary. Pro tip: If tapping is a new technique to you, make sure that your nails are cut nice and short.

Example 1

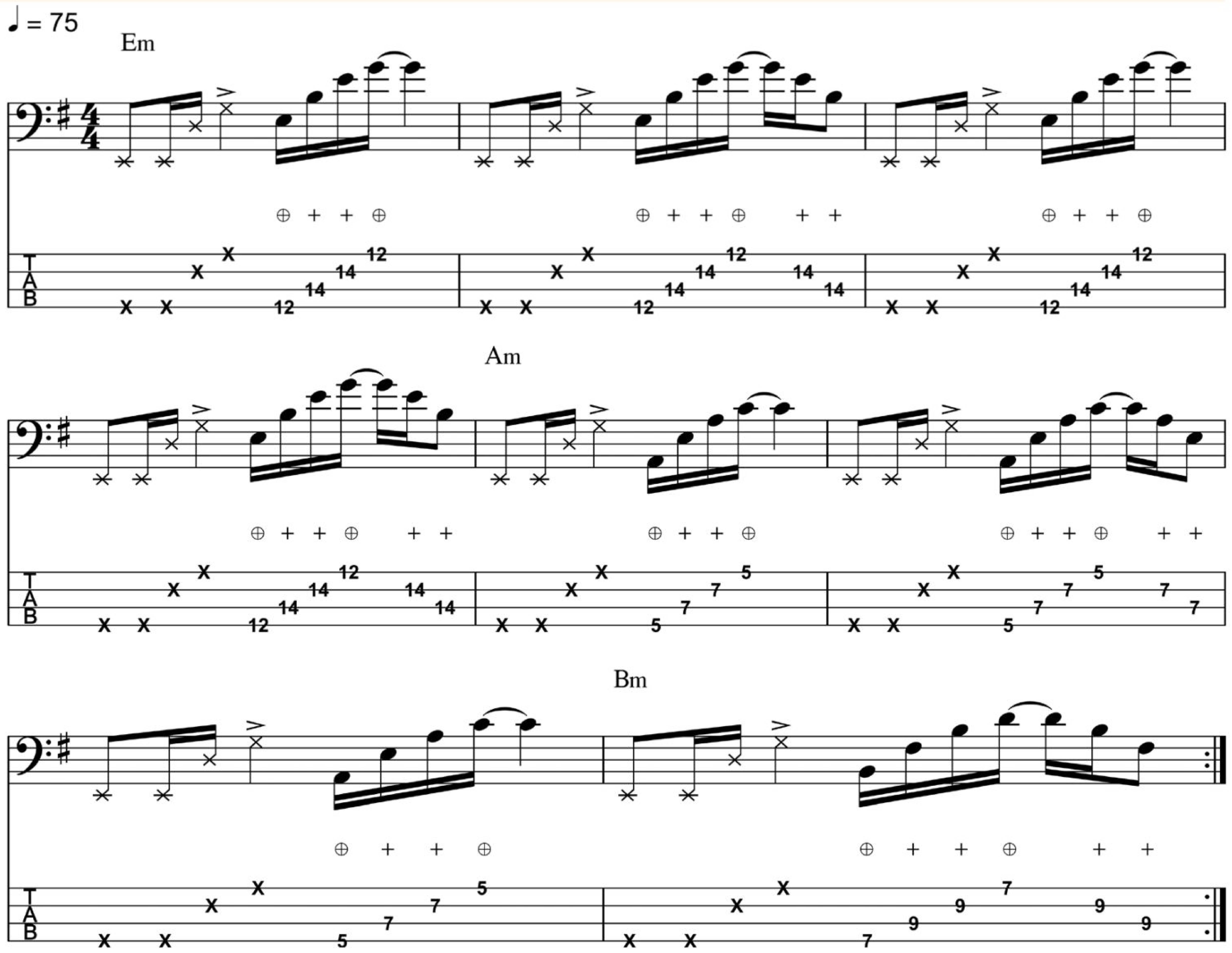
Our first example targets the I-IV and V chords in the key of G major. Whenever you work in a major key, be aware that the triadic chords on the first, fourth and fifth diatonic steps are always major – this will prove useful when you're deciphering an array of chord progressions. Beat one of the first measure is a repeating percussive figure: the word 'blackcurrant' has the same emphasis.

Strike the first note of the phrase with your thumb before the next notes are plucked with your index and middle fingers. Then, tap a major triad using a combination of both your left and right hands. This melodic interpretation repeats over the remaining IV and V chords. Pay particular attention to the fingering suggested in the notation, and take your time.



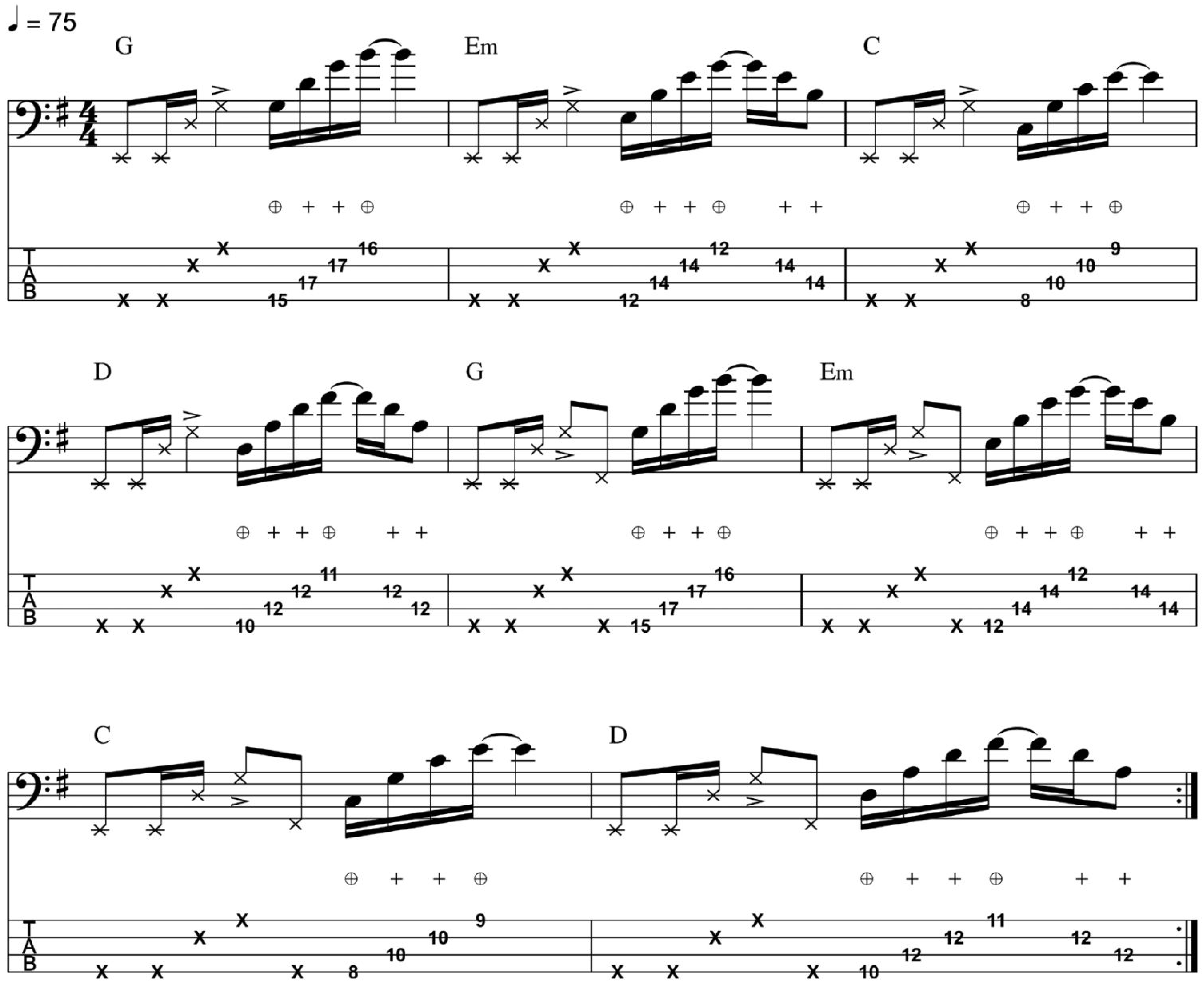
Example 2

Just as the triads on the first, fourth, and fifth diatonic steps of the major scale are major, the corresponding triads of relative minor harmony are minor. Example 2 puts this into practice by transposing the same chord progression from the first exercise into the corresponding minor key. As you arpeggiate (play each note of) the triads, ensure you're playing the first and last pitches of each structure with your fretting hand and the second and third with your plucking hand.



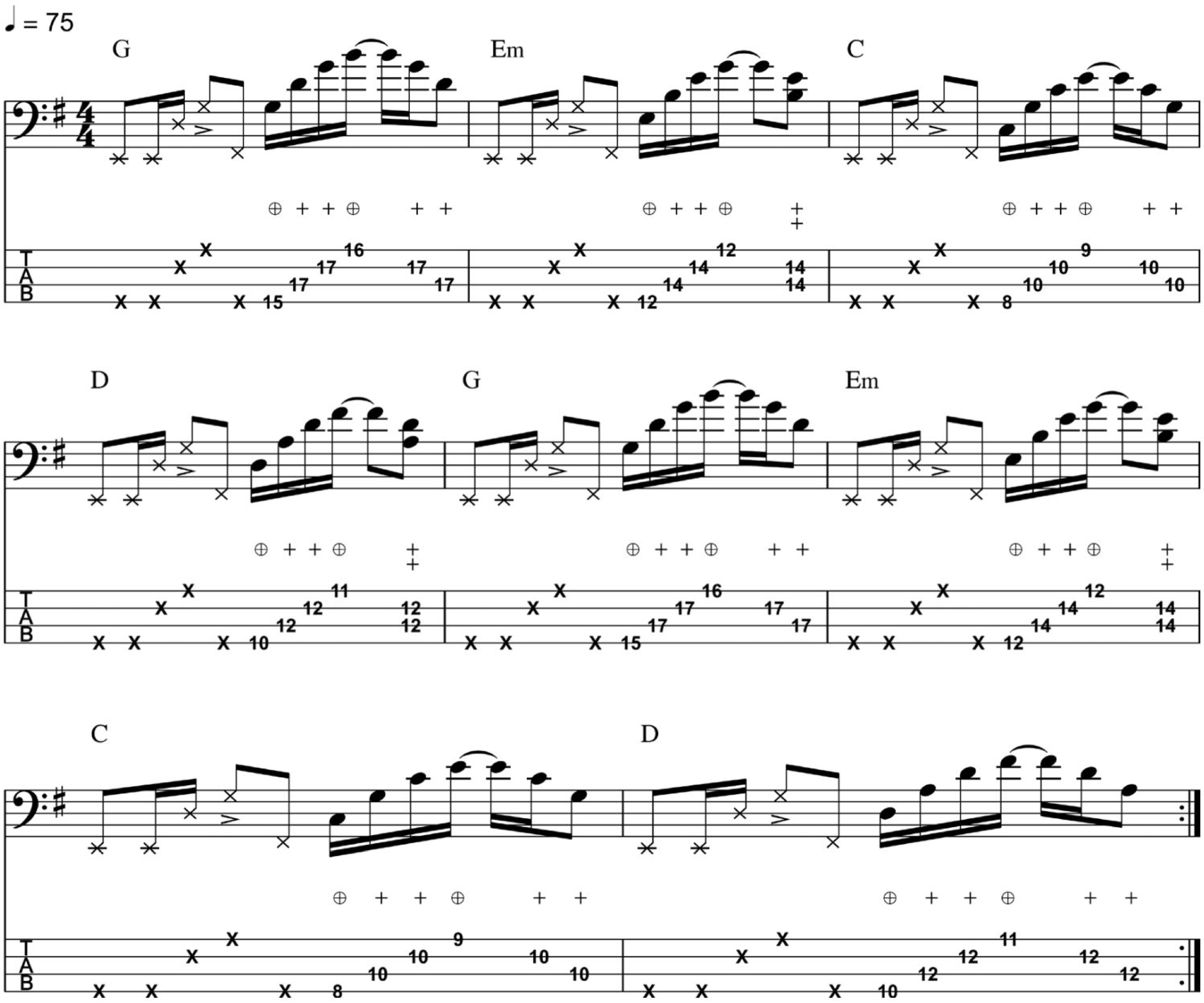
Example 3

Example 3 embarks on a I-VI-IV-V chord progression. Once again, our percussive motif appears on the first two beats of each measure, with a supplementary 8th note on the upbeat of beat two. This rhythmic occurrence limits the amount of time available to shift your hands into position for the ensuing motif, so play the percussive notes close to the fretboard to compensate for this issue.



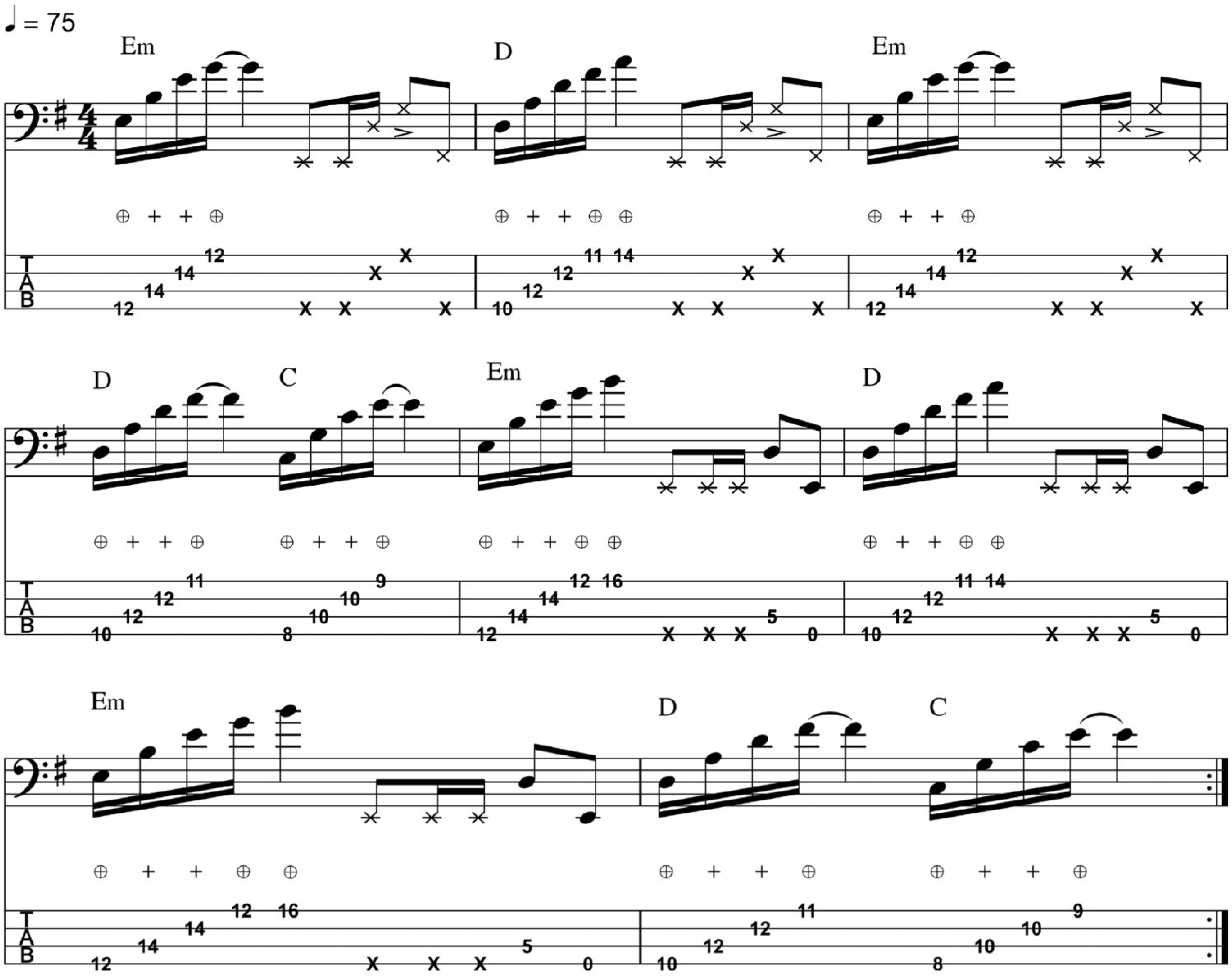
Example 4

Sometimes, tapping can create some unwanted overtones. In regular playing, you hold down a fret and then pluck the string. However, when tapping, the fundamental can vibrates between two different sources – bridge to finger, and finger to nut. Rectify this with a fret-wrap or hair scrunchie near the nut, but don't over-dampen the strings.



Example 5

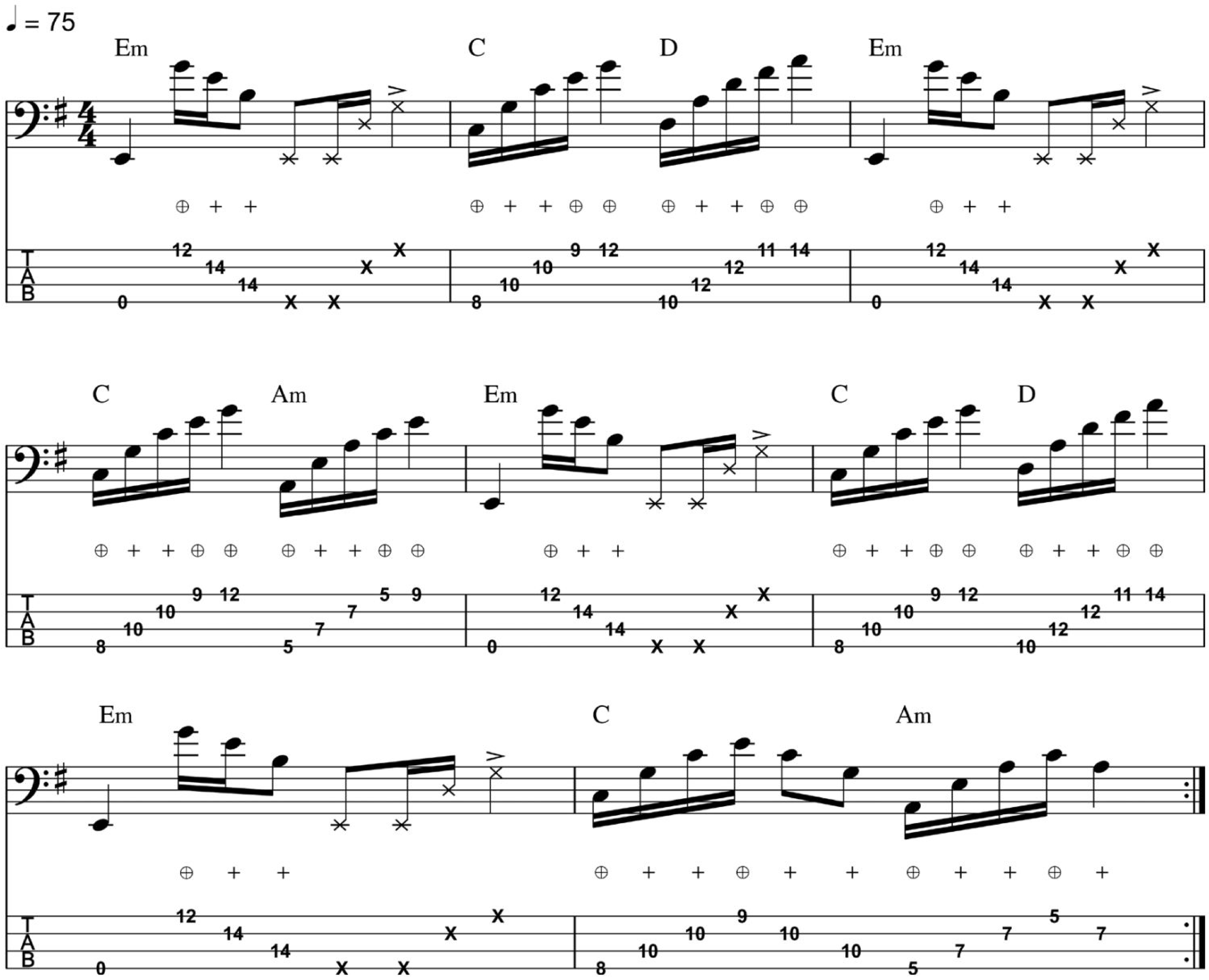
Our percussive dead notes have evolved in Example 5. Although we play them in exactly the same way as before, they now fall upon beats three and four, as opposed to beats one and two. Focusing on the chords of Em, D and C, in some instances the tapped triads move beyond the initial octave, so you'll need to cross and overlap your hands. In measures five to seven, a slap motif appears on beat three. Notice that although the melodic content has developed, the rhythmic content has remained the same.



Alex Webster of Cannibal Corpse, a master of the tap technique

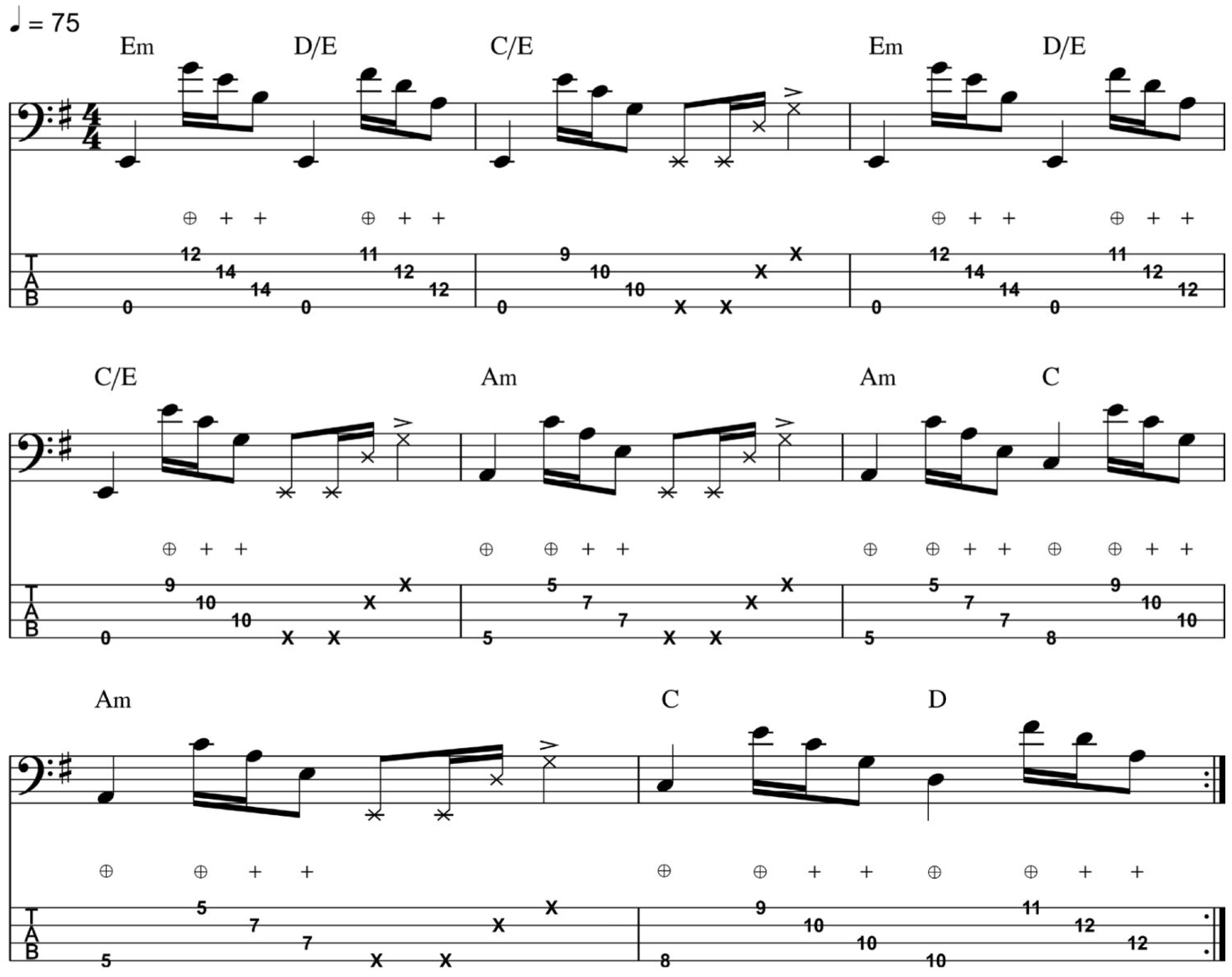
Example 6

If you assess all of this month's exercises, you'll notice that each tapping motif ascends from the tonic (root note) of each chord. In Example 6, though, we descend from the minor 10th interval. If you find yourself struggling to see where that is, locate the tonic in the upper register. Once you've seen this, picturing the associated intervals will be easier.



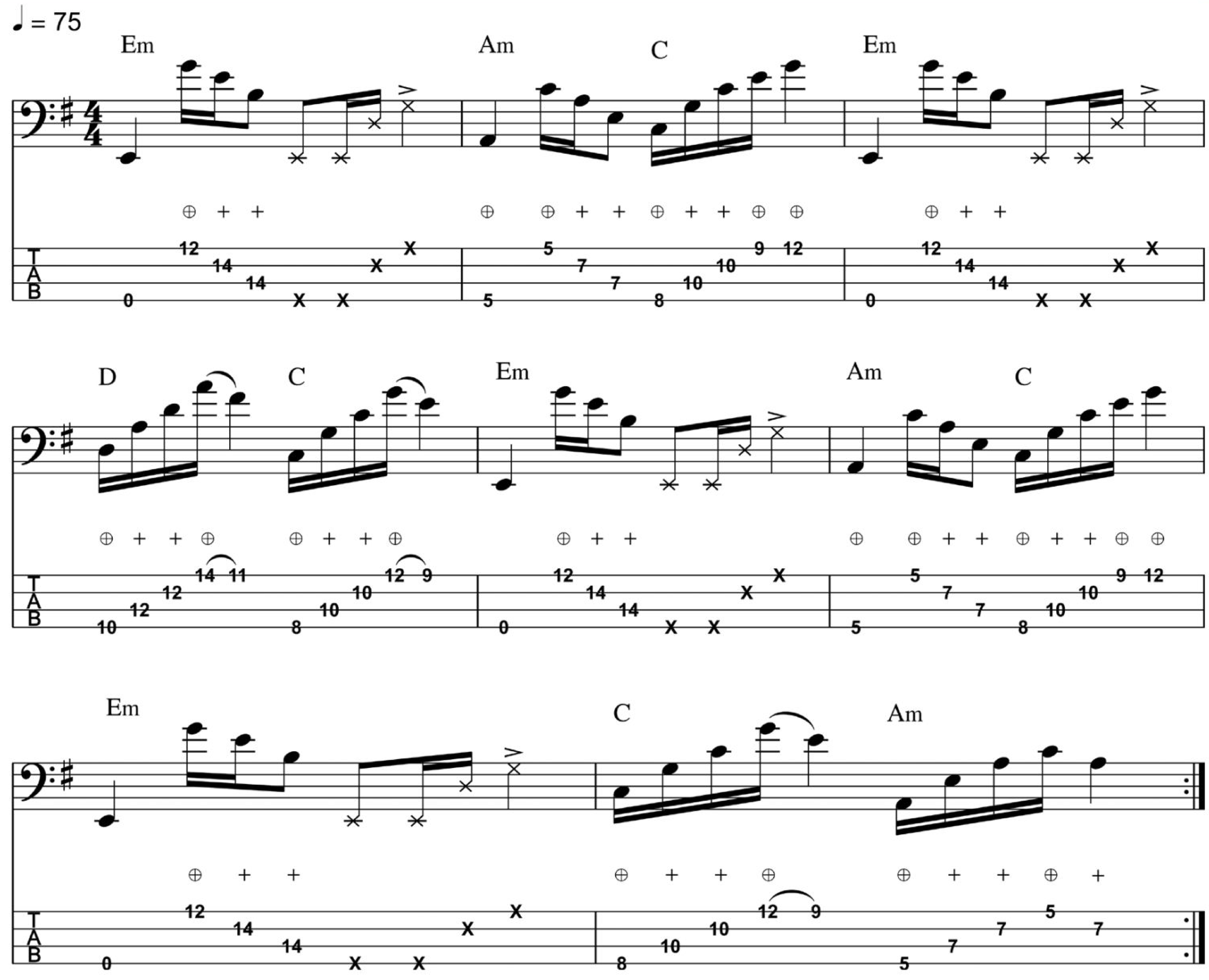
Example 7

This month's penultimate exercise features slash chords, which are just regular chords that use an alternative bass note. For example, in the opening two measures of Example 7, you'll see that the progression descends from an E minor chord down to C major. In each instance an open E string replaces the conventional bass note.



Example 8

Finally, let's collate all of these concepts. In Example 8, you'll need to cross your tapping hands, as well as producing an array of descending slurs. As before, strike the first note with your plucking hand and then use your fretting hand to pull off to the note below.



ELITES STRINGS
BASS
LONDON · ENGLAND
40 60 80 100
MEDIUM GAUGE IV
STADIUM SERIES
Peter Hook
has been using
Bass Centre
Elites Strings
for over
25 years...
So it's about
time we made
him a set of
his own!
ELITES STRINGS
BASS
LONDON · ENGLAND
60 65 85 105
PETER HOOK CUSTOM SET
The Elites Peter Hook Custom
Gauge Set is available now
www.basscentre.com
The World's First, Foremost & Most Famous Bass Guitar Specialist

STUART CLAYTON

Advanced Tutorial

Explore popped double stops further with bass guru Stuart Clayton's gold-standard masterclass

Welcome back to my ongoing series of columns focusing on advanced slap bass techniques. Last month, we looked at popping double stops, or two notes simultaneously. We'll be expanding on this concept in this month's instalment, so I recommend recapping on the previous issue's exercises before embarking on this month's material. In this instalment, we're going to be popping two notes once again, but this time in quick succession, rather than simultaneously. This technique is commonly referred to as double popping, and it can add some interesting rhythmic ideas into your playing.

> "DOUBLE POPPING CAN ADD SPICE TO YOUR SLAP LINES"

When it comes to popping notes, most players will typically favour either their first or second finger. It's nevertheless an excellent idea to be able to use either, and the material in the last issue was dependent on this. In this column, we're going to take the idea a step further, this time popping notes with the first and second fingers in sequence rather than together. The combination of thumb slaps and first- and second-finger pops makes for an excellent way to play triplets, as you will discover from the initial exercises in this month's column. These can then be used as rhythmic figures that can add spice to your slap lines.

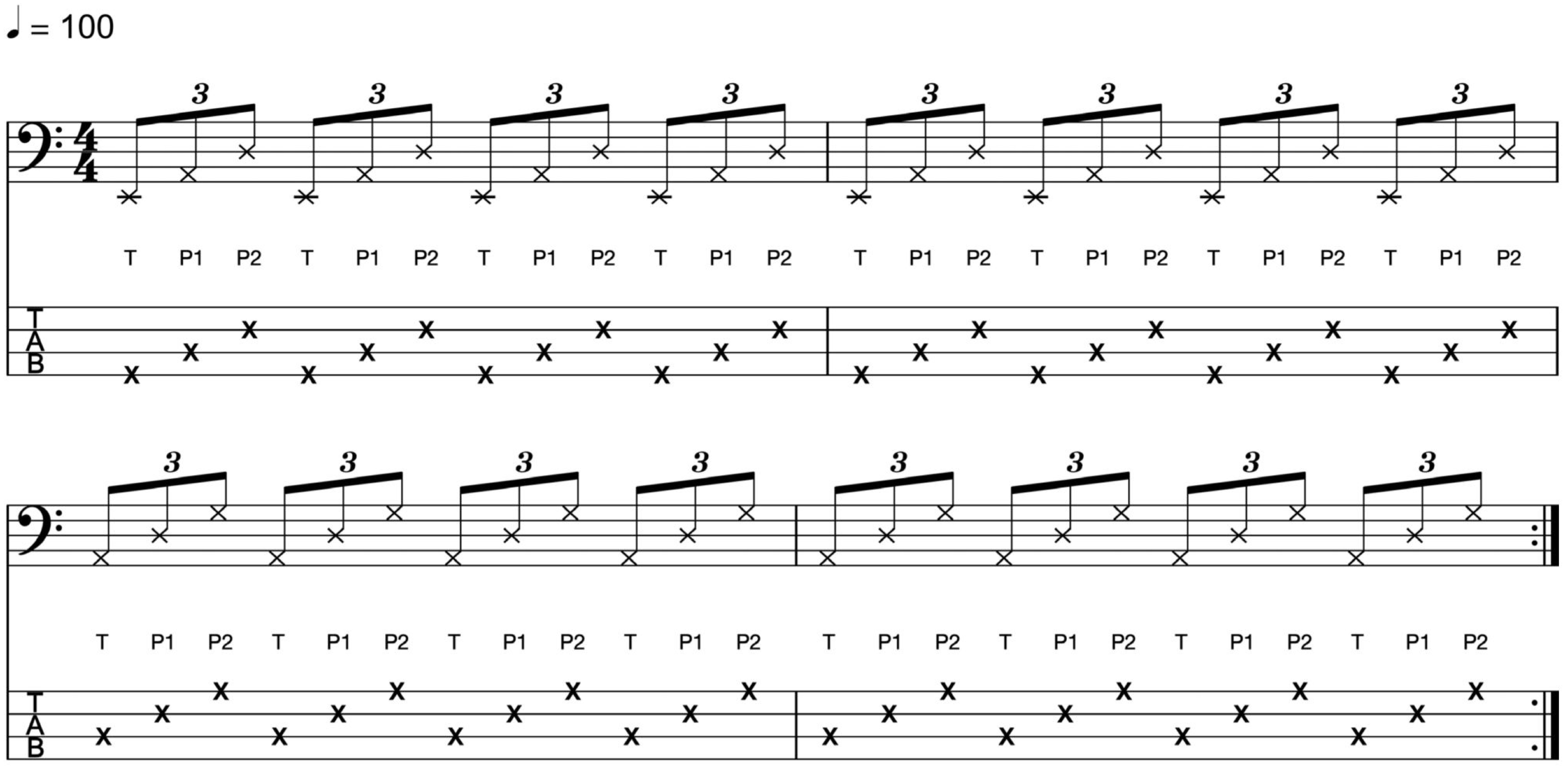
Pops will be notated in the slap guides with the symbols P1 and P2 to indicate which finger is to be used. A single letter P indicates that either finger will do. If you want to hear the double popping technique in action, I highly recommend checking out 'Count Zero' by Stuart Hamm, which features a line built entirely around them, and Victor Wooten's bass solo from 'The Sinister Minister' by Béla Fleck & The Flecktones.

Let's look at the basics of double popping. In terms of the required technique, there is little to explain if you are already comfortable with popping notes on the upper strings. The only real difference with double popping is that you will pop with the first finger and the second finger, one after the other. If you generally prefer to pop notes with your second finger, you might need to practise using the first finger directly after a slapped note, since that is when the double popping technique will most often be used.

Victor Wooten's solo in 'Sinister Minister' demonstrates double popping at its best

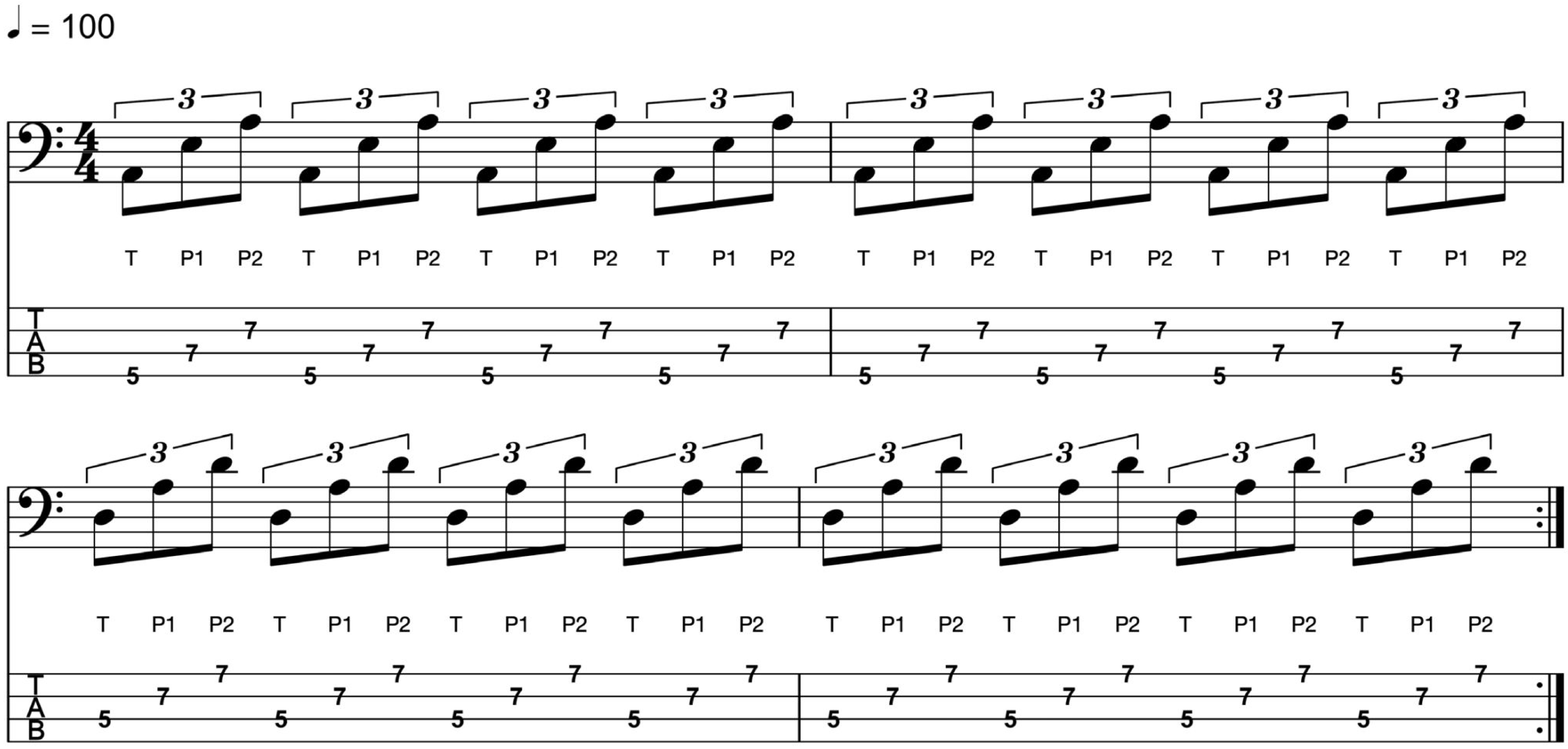
Getty

Example 1



This exercise uses ghost notes and consists of eighth-note triplets played with the thumb and first and second finger pops. In the first two bars, the E-string is slapped, and this is followed by pops on the A and D-strings. In the third and fourth bars, the A-string is slapped and is followed by pops on the D and G-strings. Popping with one finger after the other may feel a little unusual at first, so you may need to work on this for a while in order to get it to sound smooth and natural. I recommend getting comfortable with this exercise before moving on.

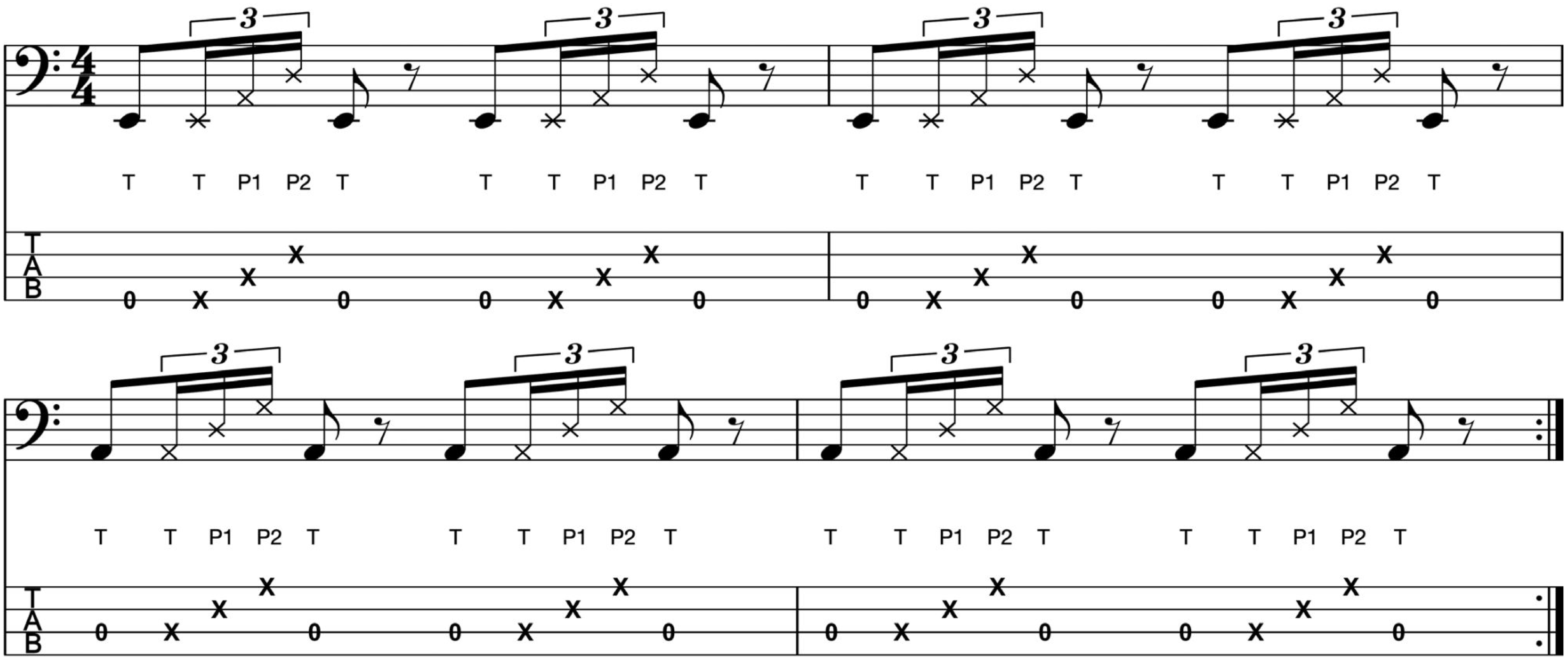
Example 2



This exercise uses the same technique as the previous one, now with pitched notes. This triplet figure is quite tough to play repeatedly, and you'll find that it is actually easier within the context of a line. Nevertheless, you should once again take the time to master this exercise before moving on.

Example 3

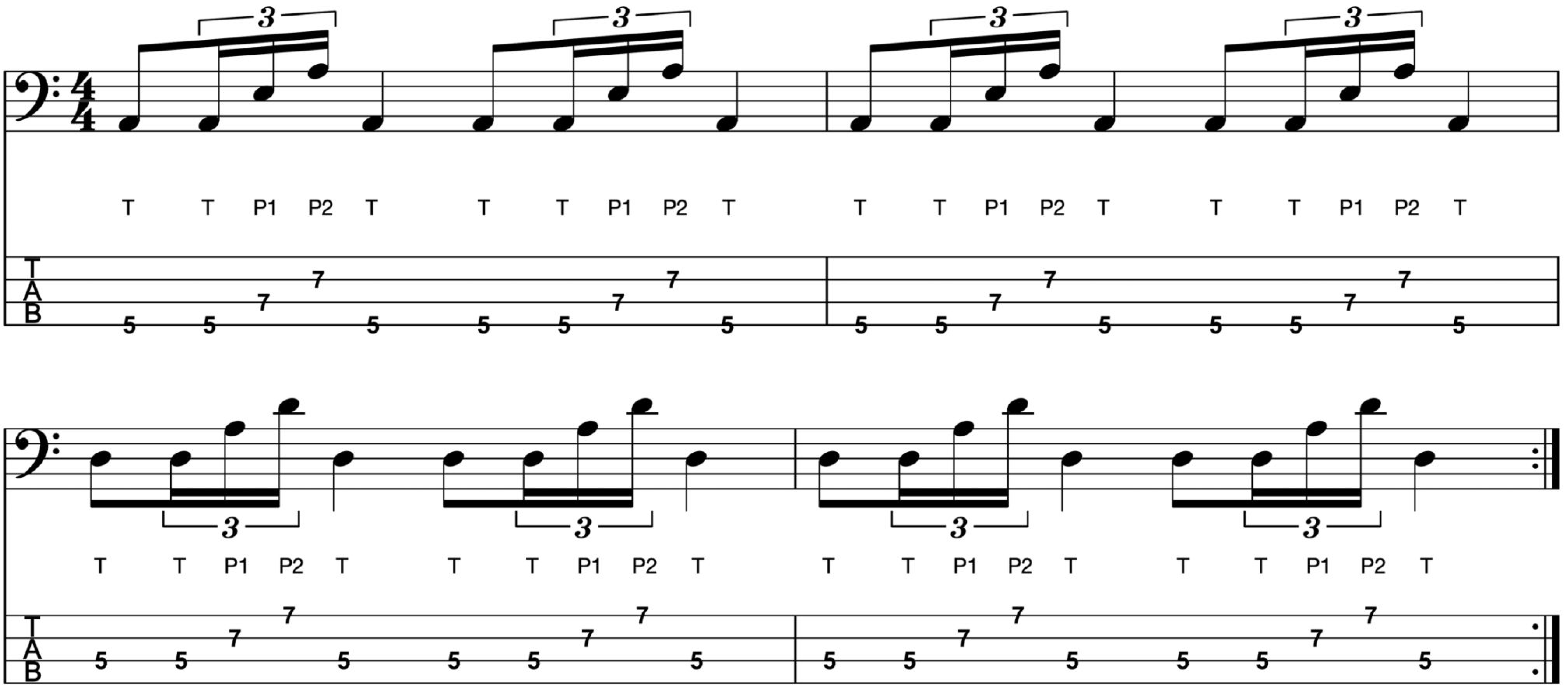
♩ = 100



Let's now use the same technique to play sixteenth note triplets. In this exercise, we'll be applying the double popping technique as part of a triplet on the second part of the beat. This has been done on beats one and three only, with single slapped notes on the second and fourth beats. You might find these triplets easier to play now that they are faster, but remember that it is important to be able to play them slowly as well.

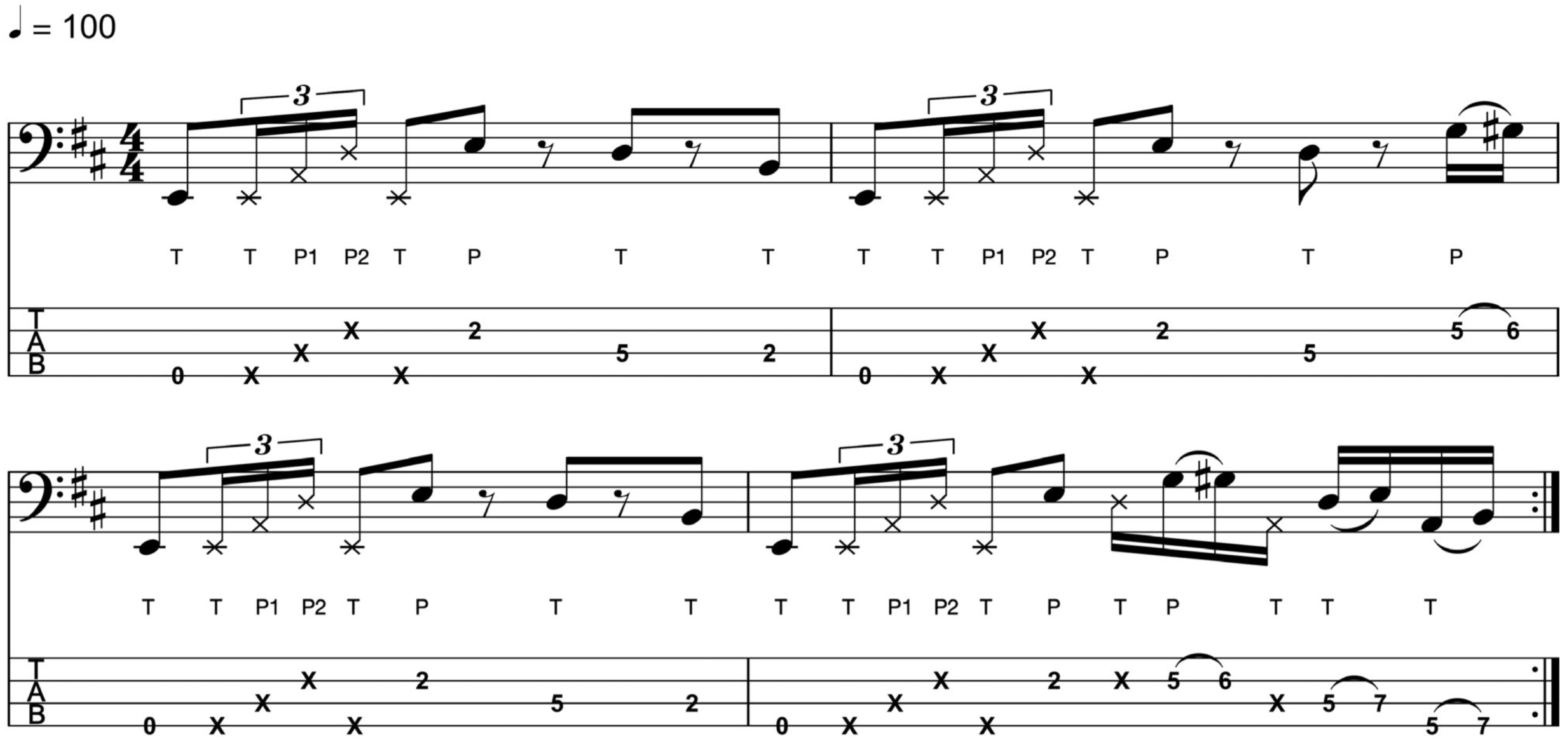
Example 4

♩ = 100



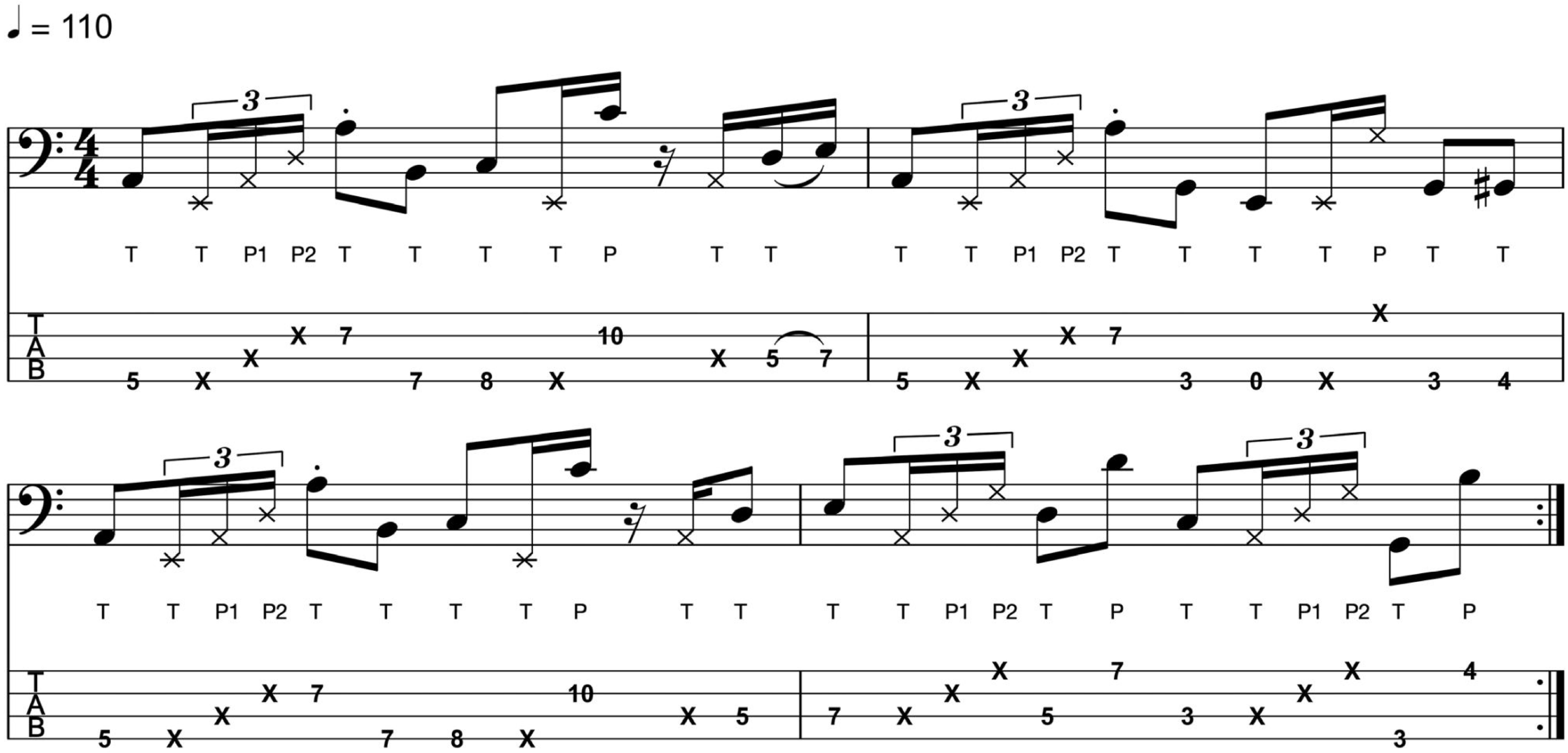
This exercise takes the ideas from the previous one, but now uses pitched (and fretted) notes.

Example 5



Now that we've worked through some exercises that will help us to practise this new technique, we can begin putting it to use in some bass grooves. This exercise is a relatively simple application of the technique. Here, we're using a double popped sixteenth note triplet figure on beat one of each bar. The remainder of the line is a simple slap and pop line.

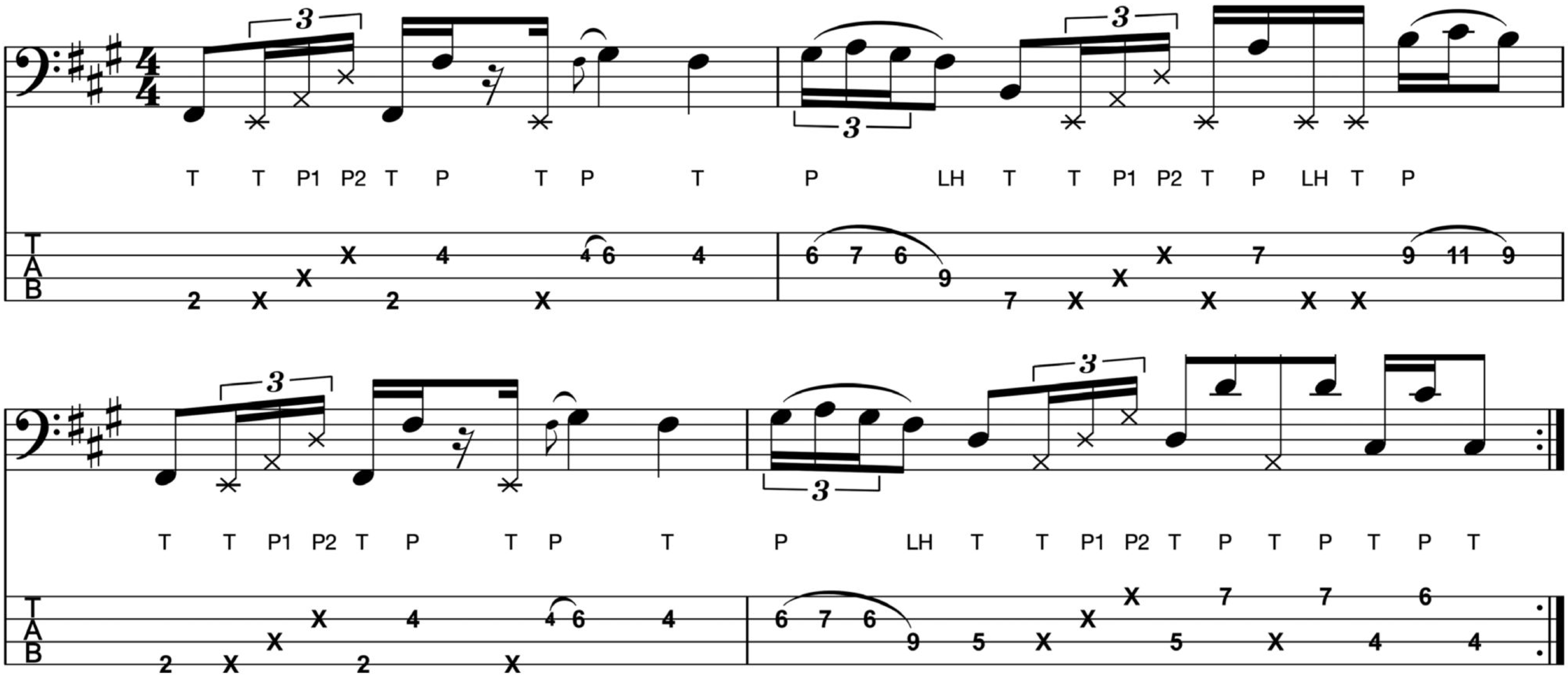
Example 6



This exercise is a funk groove that uses the double popped triplet figure as part of an ascending line in the first and third bars. The technique is then used again for the descending line in the fourth bar.

Example 7

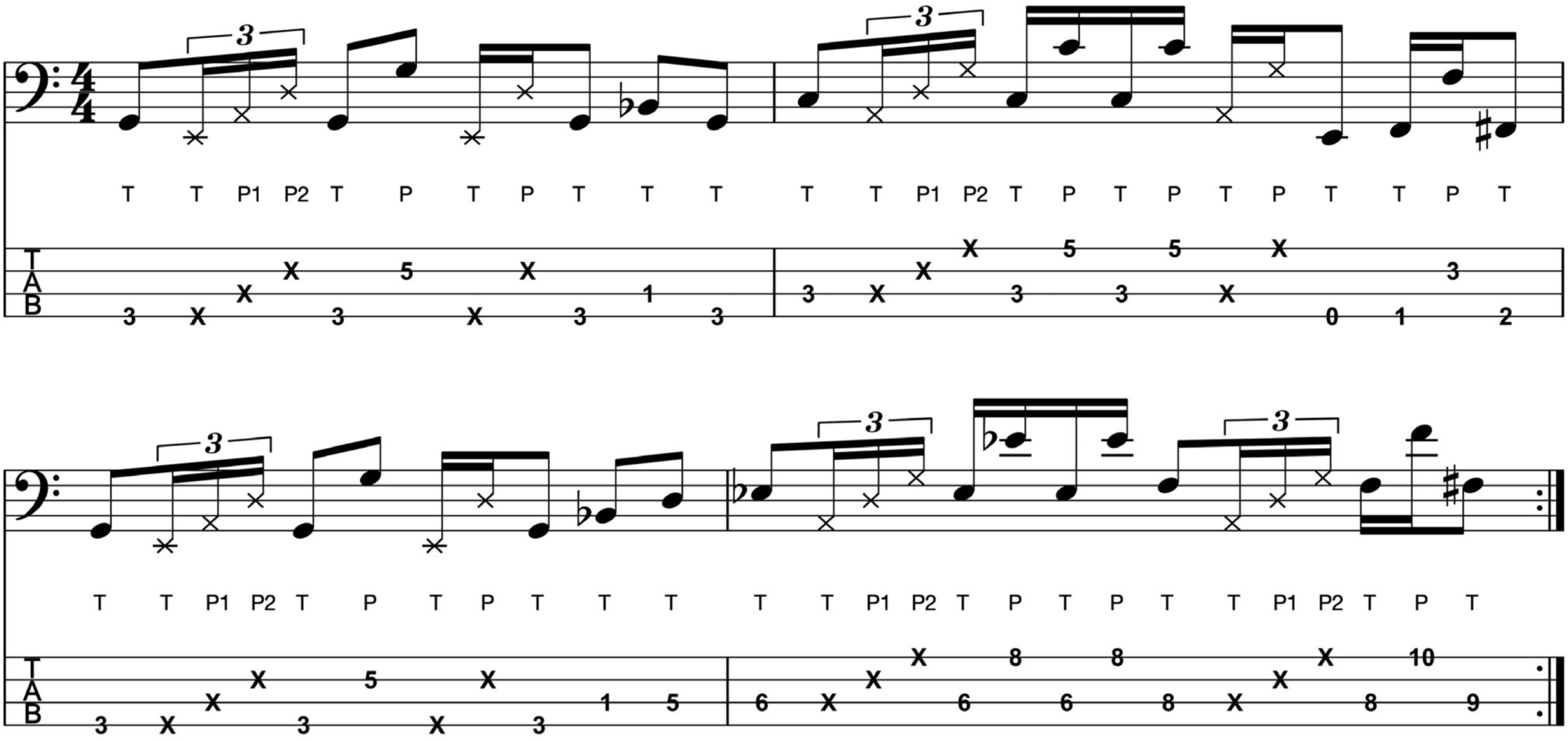
♩ = 115



As well as plenty of double popping, this exercise features a legato figure on the first beat of the second and fourth bars. Only the first note of this figure is played with the picking hand, the remaining notes are performed as a hammer-on, a pull-off and a pitched fretting hand slap. Pitched fretting-hand slaps were covered in this column a couple of months ago.

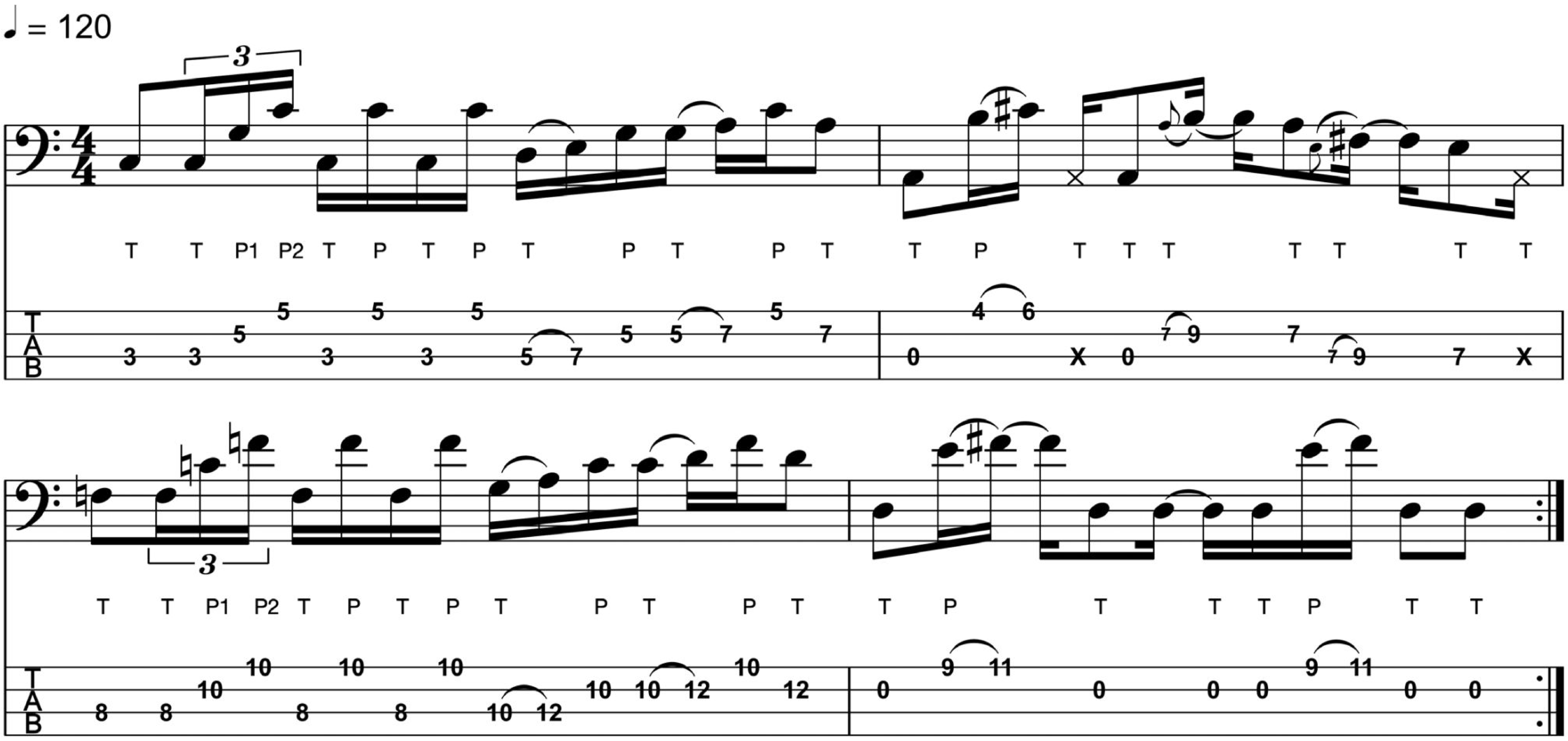
Example 8

♩ = 125



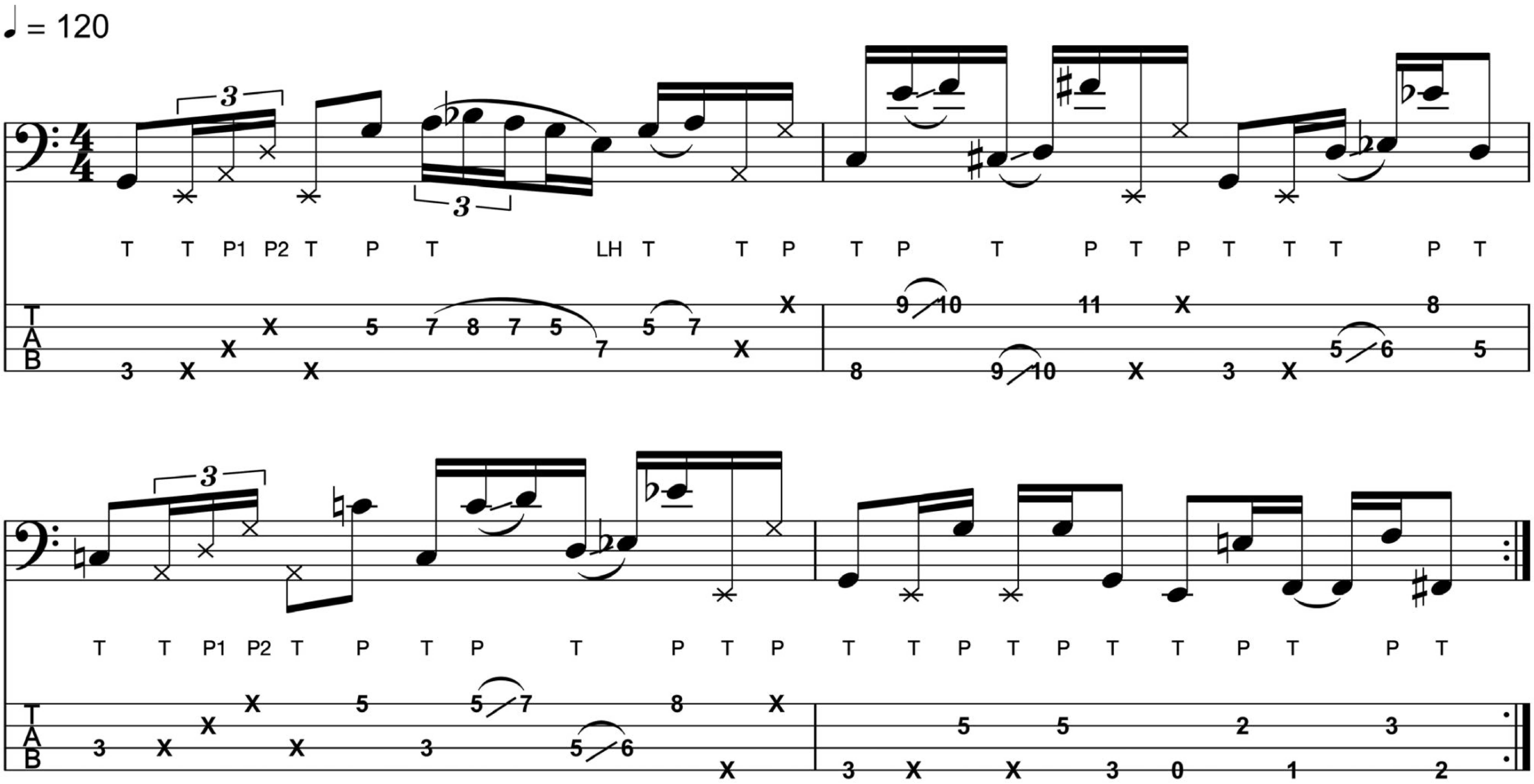
This line has a fast tempo so you should practise it slowly to begin with. The second bar contains sixteenth-note slap and pop figures that require the thumb to bounce in between the popped notes.

Example 9



This exercise is a fast and frantic line that works over the chord changes to the Weather Report classic 'Teen Town', on which the great Jaco Pastorius laid down one of his most renowned lines. Pay close attention to the figure on beat three of the first and third bars: after the hammer-on, a note is popped on the D-string and is then followed by a slap on the same note for the start of the next hammer-on. The rhythmic figures can be challenging because of the use of grace notes: these have no actual rhythmic value in the bar and should therefore be played as quickly as possible. Note the use of tenths: a useful device for making bass parts more harmonically interesting.

Example 10



This exercise uses the double popping technique in the first and third bars. The legato figure on the third beat of the first bar is quite tricky: you only slap once, on the D-string, and the rest of the notes are performed as hammer-ons, pull-offs and a pitched fretting hand slap. The second bar contains sliding tenths, a concept often used by Mark King of Level 42. Try to let the lower notes ring under the upper ones to enhance the chordal effect.

THE LAST NOTE

The great Dan Veall continues to sign off each issue of this magazine with a subject close to all our hearts – and essential tips about how to do it right. This month: reverb pedals

Welcome! The delay effect, which we studied in last month's column, is usually defined as a very obvious repeat of a sound. In the world we inhabit, spaces have lots of surfaces – some near, some far – each of which consist of different materials. Sounds bounce off these surfaces, creating repeated echoes. Multiple such reflections from close range may not be separately distinguishable to the human ear; instead, we perceive the bigger or wider sound of reverberation – 'reverb' for short.

VERY GOOD. IS IT TRUE THAT REVERB PEDALS CAN BE EITHER ANALOGUE OR DIGITAL?

Yes, although the very mention of the word 'digital' will have some folk running for cover. No need to fear, though – advances in modern technology have created incredibly lifelike facsimiles of real-world spaces in the virtual domain. The reverb qualities of specific venues across the world have been sampled for us to enjoy in our bedroom studios. Analogue reverbs may not have the same exacting parameters, but they still sound great.

BUT WHY WOULD I USE REVERB WITH A BASS?

Well, reverb is often used while recording to give an instrument a sense of space or depth. It allows the instrument to slot into a mix realistically, and can make it feel less as if it is stuck at front and centre, dominating the recording. In a live situation, even while you're practising at home, reverb applied to chordal or solo playing can bring your improvisations to life. Beware, though: reverb sounds lovely on bass, but add too much and the punch of the sound can be lost. This happens when the lower frequencies become overwhelmed with reverb reflections.

OKAY, I'VE GOT A REVERB PEDAL. WHAT THE HELL DO ALL THOSE KNOBS DO?

Level governs the level of the overall effect, balanced against the sound when the pedal is disengaged.

Time or **Decay** controls the amount of time, usually in seconds, for which the reverb reflections continue until completely decayed away.

EQ, **HPF**, **Tone** or **Damp** As with many other pedals I have talked about in this continuing column, equalisation can range from a very simple filter to an advanced set of parameters. In the case of reverb, equalisation presets can help to simulate room surfaces, ranging from soft furnishings to concrete walls or glass.

Pre-Delay is the amount of time before the reverb effect kicks in after the initial note, often in milliseconds. It can help to provide separation between notes, or permit longer settings for artificial sounds.

Mix is simply the balance between your dry, or unaffected, sound and that of the reverb effect.

ANY OTHER JARGON I NEED TO KNOW?

Plate Originally, studios employed massive sheets of metal to generate reverb. A transducer element vibrated when audio signals hit it, and a second element collected the resulting vibrations at the other end. The plate had a very particular sound, which this effect type replicates.

Spring Early amplifiers used long springs suspended in metal trays, in an arrangement similar to plate reverbs. These 'Reverb Tanks' have a very specific tone, which in the right context is rather pleasing, although it can be a little harsh at times.

Room, **Hall**, **Cavern** These were the original analogue terms for various room types. Modern digital effects give us very accurate reproductions of real-world spaces.

Reverse A very clever method of producing a reverb tail – but then playing it out of the pedal backwards. Great for those psychedelic tones, man.

Speciality reverbs Multi-effect pedals often have cascaded effect blocks, which create ever-richer spatial tones. Pitchshifting, modulation effects and delays acting on the reverb are just the obvious possibilities.

Stereo or **Mono**
Of course, we hear in stereo – and thus for the most immersive and realistic experience, stereo reverb always gets my vote.

DAN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Use reverb sparingly. Short 'room' reverb mixed low on bass can give the perception that an amplifier has been recorded in a room space when it is simply a plugin from a digital audio workstation (DAW). I'm careful, unless it's an effect that I specifically want to achieve, to keep deep, cavernous reverb away from my low bass frequencies. In a live situation, watch out for the venue's natural reverb too – as you may find your bass sound swallowed up. Finally, if you love this effect, then check out Devin Townsend's album *Casualties Of Cool*, which is swamped in luscious reverb!

Thanks for reading! Each of my columns will give you some ideas of your own – and remember, there are no rules, so do experiment and let me know how you get on. If you've got a question for me, find me on social media as @DanVeallBassist.

LEARN MORE:
WWW.ASHDOWNMUSIC.COM
RE-DEFINING
YOUR EXPECTATIONS
THE Studio RANGE
ULTRA LIGHTWEIGHT-COMPACT-POWERFUL
STUDIO 15
- 11.3Kgs - 24.9lbs -
STUDIO 12
- 11.9Kgs - 26.2lbs -
STUDIO 10
- 9.3Kgs - 20.5lbs -
STUDIO 8
- 7.7Kgs - 17lbs -

ERNIE BALL
HYBRID SLINKY BASS
45 65 85 105
CUSTOM GAUGE ROUNDWOUND
BASS STRINGS 2833 MADE IN USA
ERNIE BALL
EXTRA SLINKY BASS
40 60 70 95
CUSTOM GAUGE ROUNDWOUND
BASS STRINGS 2835 MADE IN USA
ERNIE BALL
SUPER SLINKY BASS
45 65 80 100
CUSTOM GAUGE ROUNDWOUND
BASS STRINGS 2834 MADE IN USA
ERNIE BALL
BEEFY SLINKY BASS
65 80 100 130
CUSTOM GAUGE ROUNDWOUND
BASS STRINGS 2840 MADE IN USA
ERNIE BALL
REGULAR SLINKY BASS
50 70 85 105
CUSTOM GAUGE ROUNDWOUND
BASS STRINGS 2832 MADE IN USA
ERNIE BALL
POWER SLINKY BASS
55 75 90 110
CUSTOM GAUGE ROUNDWOUND
BASS STRINGS 2831 MADE IN USA

9020

9000